

February

The American **Mercury**



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THE AMERICAN FUTURE

By H. L. MENCKEN

25 cents a copy

The American MERCURY

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THE Pink brethren, when the mood for prophecy is on them, which is very often, are bounced and torn between two antagonistic visions. With one clairvoyant eye they see the United States delivered over to a soviet of one-crop farmers, blood-sweating Labor leaders, saucy young pedagogues, and contributors to the *New Republic*; and with the other they behold it under the paws of a small, compact band of werewolves on the general order of Mussolini, Hitler, the late Cipriano Castro, Sir Oswald Mosley, and the Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith. It is not easy to make out which vision they consider the more authentic. On the days when hope leaps high in their hearts they dream of lolling voluptuously in their scarlet paradise, with Heywood Broun in charge of the

Hearst papers, Mike Gold interpreting a Moscow-made Constitution as Chief Justice of the United States, Waldo Frank president of both Harvard University and the E. I. duPont de Nemours Company, and Upton Sinclair at last accommodated at the public teat. But on days when the sky is overcast and cold chills run up and down their spines, they are afflicted by images of Heywood's head on a pike outside the gates of San Simeon, Mike chained up in a concentration camp at Easthampton, L. I., and Waldo and Upton beating a posse to the Mexican border by no more than the length of their suspenders.

The latter hallucination, I suspect, really flows out of the former. The Pinks have a magnificent capacity for mistaking Freudian

wishes for objective facts, but they are still in sufficient contact with reality to know, if only subconsciously, that the difference between Communism and Fascism is fundamentally very slight, and that the one always tends to turn into the other. It happened in Italy and Germany, it is happening in Spain and France, and on some near tomorrow it may also happen in Russia. Communism, or something roughly resembling it, is always the first choice of nations suffering from delirium tremens, but as they gradually recover their faculties they move with apparently irresistible force toward Fascism. It was not Hitler who opened the way for the Nazi evangel in Germany; it was Kurt Eisner, whose *Räterepublik* was set up in Munich in 1918. The patient Münchenerers stood the ensuing carnival of murder and pillage for four or five months, and then they rushed out of their beer-cellars and put it down. One of the spectators of the roughhouse was no less a personage than Adolf Himself, then a young war hero, hoping only for a pension. But it didn't take him long to see which way the bandwagon of human progress was heading, and soon he was hanging on to its tail gate and preparing to edge up to the driver's seat.

I pass over the only too obvious cases of Italy, Spain, and France, and turn to Russia, the Zion of all the economically and intellectually underprivileged. The late plot of Zinoviev and company has been variously interpreted by the American Radeks, but it seems to me to be highly probable that the historians of the future, if any sensible ones are hatched, will see in it the first pulsations of Fascism. What Zinoviev and his friends hoped to do, clearly enough, was to turn out the boys now in possession of the Kremlin, and run the country on their own, with no help save from divine inspiration. If they had won instead of lost, they might have kept up, for a time, the outward forms and trappings of Communism, but it must be plain that they had thrown overboard all confidence in its essential hooey. Nor is there any reason to believe that the confidence of Stalin and company is much firmer. Indeed, they have already gone so far in abandoning Communism that, with a few inconsiderable changes, *Mein Kampf* would now make a better Bible for them than *Das Kapital*. In a little while, the last vestiges of the Marxian whim-wham will disappear from their pronunciamientos, the common run of Russians will be as frankly wage-slaves

as the citizens of Aliquippa, Pa., and all that remains of Utopia will be an occasional "election" on the model of Hitler's solemn plebiscites, with room for only one cross mark on the ballot, and a hundred stripes across the bare *tokos* for any fiend in human form who refrains from yessing.

Thus the Pinks of this great Republic, when they yield to their uneasy fears of castor oil, pogroms, concentration camps, and other such unpleasantnesses, are well within the bounds of reason, as strange as it may seem. For they must be aware, deep down in their miasmatic and unhappy souls, that the nearer they approach to their hearts' desire the closer they will come to disaster. It is all well enough to talk beautifully of sharing the national wealth, producing for use only, eliminating the profit motive, and so on and so on, but it must be manifest that only a small minority of Americans actually believe in any of these things, and that not many who do believe in them can speak sound English. The Americano, during a century of suffering in the public schools, has had quite different ideas ground into him. He believes in property as firmly as he believes that Friday is an unlucky day, and it would take a force of at least a

million evangelists, working in eight-hour shifts like coal miners, to disabuse him in anything short of a geological epoch. To be sure, it is easy to convince him, as demagogues of the Roosevelt-Bryan-La Follette type are constantly convincing him, that the property of the other fellow ought to be seized by the State and turned into his own pocket; but no demagogue has ever been foolhardy enough to argue that it ought to be passed on still further to the pockets of third, fourth, and *n*th fellows. No, the Americano holds, as a cardinal article of faith, that once he has got his hands upon the other fellow's property, it should be his for all eternity—and any orator who proposed to pry him loose from it, even in the idealistic wilds of Wisconsin or Arkansas, would go out of town on a rail.

This affection for worldly goods is particularly strong in American farmers, for farmers everywhere are a notably grasping and selfish race of men. No one ever heard of one of them giving up anything willingly—not even a plugged nickel or a snifter of radiator alcohol. If the price of wheat could be lifted, by some magic of Wallace, Ickes, and the other sorcerers, to \$100 a bushel, and millions of city folk were reduced to a choice be-

tween eating asphalt and starving, every actual dirt farmer in the United States would rush to the nearest church, break down the door, leap upon the high altar, and howl his gratitude to God.

It was the resistance of the farmers at home, not the machinations of evil men without, that gave the Bolsheviki their worst headaches during the first fifteen years of the USSR. That resistance, unorganized as it was, yet sufficed to produce two or three appalling famines, to reduce the ruble to its value as shaving paper, and to force Lenin into the ignominious compromise of the New Economic Policy, now happily forgotten by the American Pinks. But in the United States the yaps would certainly not be unorganized, nor would they lack leaders. The very mountebanks who have been operating on them for a generation past, inflaming them against Wall Street, would switch overnight to inflaming them against the 13th Street Kremlin, and in less time than it takes to tell it, the principal genii of the presidium would be bellowing for the police.

As I have said, a disquieting realization of this unhappy fact haunts the genii in the midst of their gaudiest fulminations, and in consequence they issue warnings

against Fascism even oftener than they announce that Communism is only around the corner. Their dread of it, in fact, keeps them in a constant sweat, and probably causes them more real suffering than the bad beer they drink or the lubricity of the unappetizing females who are inspired to give their all by reading the *New Masses*. But the tremors and nightmares of such solemn donkeys are no more to be accepted as evidence than their occasional exultations. They are far out upon a creaky limb when they dream of seizing the country and putting all their betters to the torture, and they are still further out upon an even creakier limb when they shiver in anticipation of the chain-gang. This imperial Christian nation, in point of fact, is moving toward neither Communism nor Fascism, though it supports and endures trifling minorities who clamor for both. The great bulk of its people prefer a sober middle course—the traditional American course, hallowed by the Fathers. That is to say, they prefer to follow indigenous mountebanks, bled in the native technique and speaking the native vulgate. Such mountebanks have been saving them quadrennially for a hundred years, and will continue at the job to the end of

the chapter. Dr. Roosevelt, though he wears a halo, is certainly no god from the machine, no messiah sent from afar. He belongs to a hierarchy of wonder-workers which stretches back without a break to the first days of the Republic, and includes all the heroes that school-boys are taught to revere.

II

It is interesting to speculate about the probable consequences if the American people had followed more rational and honest leaders, and so avoided the hornswoggling that has kept them in a lather year in and year out, and wasted so much of their money—interesting, but vain. The truth is that, despite the excessive cost of salvation, they still manage to survive it, and remain extraordinarily fit, fat, and full of sin. We inhabit, indeed, a kind of Utopia, and it would be recognized as such if the preaching of bogus Utopians were not so strident. No other nation in history has been so favorably situated, or enjoyed so long a run of good luck. We are as secure against actual famine as the Mesopotamia of Abraham's time, and as safe against foreign invasion as if we inhabited the moon. Our national income, in bad times as in good,

is far above that of any other people, and it is more equitably distributed than elsewhere—all the bellowings of the demagogues, whether pink or yellow, to the contrary notwithstanding. In the midst of a Depression so deep and so wide that the collapse of Western civilization was predicted by all the recognized wizards and haruspices, our roads continued to swarm with colliding and exploding motor cars, all our movie-parlors were crowded from noon to midnight, and millions had more leisure, and also more change in their pockets, than they had ever had before. Was a vast public debt rolled up? Then ten years of Normalcy will suffice to pay it off—and meanwhile there is no demand for the money from those who furnished it. Did the suffering farmer suffer some more, and yowl some more? Then even in his lowliest (and, indeed, hardly human) incarnation as a sharecropper, he was still vastly better off than the lordliest of his peers in Russia. Were we ridden and rowelled by Hopkins and Tugwell, Ickes and Wallace, Ma Perkins and Jim Farley, and a multitude of other such jitney Caesars? Then think of the rulers of Italy and Germany, Russia and Spain, even France and England!

The New Deal, to be sure, is a colossal nuisance. It itches terribly, and is an affront to human dignity. But so is eczema—yet very few men die of eczema. We have been through much more dangerous calamities, and survived without serious damage. The Civil War would have wrecked any other country on earth, but the effect here, save in a narrow area of the South, was hardly worse than that of the annual national drunk on New Year's Eve. The Bryan uprising, in several ways, was more dangerous to both the national economy and the national peace than the Roosevelt buffoonery, but it was forgotten six months after it was put down, just as Prohibition was forgotten. There was a time, at the height of the Anti-Saloon League's hegemony, when the essentially American scheme of things was far more seriously threatened than it will ever be by Pennsylvania mine-guards or Union Square orators; and there was another time, as the Ku Klux Klan leaped full-blown from the loins of the American Legion, when it looked to be certain that a real bath of blood was ahead. But today the Zinovievs of the Klan are all in jail, the Legion has become so tame that its current boss is actually praised by the American Civil Lib-

erties Union, and the Anti-Saloon League is as dead as the More Abundant Life will be anon. Johnson is gone, Moley is gone, Peck is gone, and Tugwell has taken a prudent header into a vat of molasses. The rest will fade out gradually, and by April 1, 1941, even the *Führer* Himself will be only an ex-President, which is to say, only the molted shell of a man, with none so poor to turn on the dial when he croons. Thus they come and go. There have been some God-awful ones in the endless procession, but we are a tough people, and do not seem to be easily ruined.

III

Our fundamental problem, as I have hitherto argued from this stump, is a problem of population. We have bred too many morons at home, and we have admitted too many misfits and malcontents from foreign parts. The sterilization of the unfit still seems to most of us to be too brutal a measure to be put into general use, and the clergy continue to bawl against it as they once bawled against the Copernican cosmology; but soon or late it will be given a trial on a really comprehensive and more or less scientific scale. My guess is

that it will turn out to be a roaring success, and that the loudest whoop-las will come from the laboratory animals. Once, indeed, the news gets about that it eliminates the historic pains and penalties of love without diminishing the entertainment value, loud demands for the knife will come from all the recesses of the Bible country, and every yap Congressman in Washington will be converted.

But this is for the future, which has a way of lingering coyly just over the horizon. I predict nothing formally; I merely surmise and speculate. The assimilation of the immigrant is also likely to take a long while—much longer, in all probability, than most people think. The Fathers apparently thought that when they signed their names to the Declaration of Independence they created thereby a new and indivisible nation, but the event showed that they were rather too optimistic. The Germans who came in during the third quarter of the last century were found, in 1917, to be still mainly Germans, and what is more, the Englishmen of the old stock were found to be still Englishmen. It is thus no wonder that the later immigrants continue to radiate the scents of their forsaken homelands,

and occasionally shock the general public with their exotic fancies. I see nothing remarkable, and certainly nothing disquieting, in the fact that so many Russian Jews keep their eyes on Russia, and are disposed to follow Russian mountebanks rather than our own. They will continue to do so until the last memories of the old home fade out of their race, and that will be many a year. It will also be many a year until the last American Italian ceases to thrill when the Roman legions sweep down upon some heathen Gomorrah and give its inhabitants the felicity of Christian burial.

Such weaknesses belong to human nature, which was never more lush and lovely than it is in this Republic. Considering everything, we have done pretty well. It will be another generation before all Americans speak the national language with anything approaching ease, and it will be a dozen generations before they begin to look, think, and smell alike, even to the extent that Frenchmen or Germans look, think, and smell alike. Despite some very adroit attempts to wreck the ship, it has kept on a reasonably steady course for more than a century and a half, and there seems to be no good reason for believing that it will be diverted to

any serious extent hereafter. The loud hullabaloo of Utopians and revolutionists is raised at intervals, but it never seems to have any effect. "About 1792, when I was entering life," wrote Sir Walter Scott in his old age, "the admiration of the godlike system of the French Revolution was so rife [in England] that only a few old-fashioned Jacobites and the like ventured to hint a preference for the land they lived in, or pretended to doubt that the new principles must be infused into our worn-out constitution." But in the end nothing happened—and nothing, in all probability, will happen here—

nothing, that is, save the familiar marching-past of transparent charlatans, each promising the nether majority something for nothing, and each succeeded, in his turn, by another promising more something for less nothing. It is, to be sure, a stupid process, but it at least has the capital virtue of being amusing, and it seems to do no harm. After four long years of intensive and relentless salvation, carried on by virtuosi of unparalleled ardor and no visible competence or conscience, the country is still solvent and even prosperous, and the best pickings, as usual, are going to the smartest fellows.



CHARACTER SKETCH

BY LOUISE McNEILL

EACH renouncement, great or small,
 Was a stone upon the wall,
 And she labored well and long
 That it might be high and strong,
 So her soul, at last, could see
 Nothing but eternity.
 When she paused to catch her breath
 There was nothing left but death.

HE CARRIES a gun these days, following an assault by two unidentified men a year ago in which he lost a brand new tooth. He is accompanied wherever he goes by a massive, lethargic fellow named Pete, who says nothing at all but who watches all strangers with a coldly appraising eye. Thus guarded is the life of Walter Winchell. But such inconveniences are easily endured. Winchell earns well over \$200,000 a year by baring the private lives of actresses, movie stars, jazz-band leaders, glittering ladies, the amiable prey of such ladies, and the often ridiculous people who hope that they constitute Society.

Such wealth was beyond the imagination of the second-rate little vaudeville hoofer who toured the circuits of the Middle West a brief fifteen years ago. Walter Winchel — he spelled his name with one l then — earned from \$50 to \$75 a week, when he was working. He was a song-and-dance man who would shuffle from the wings with a blonde partner.

“Why’s a corset like a three-day-old beard?” he would ask the blonde, and then do a tap.

“I dunno, Walter,” she would answer drearily.

“Because they’re both stiff,” he would answer — and tap furiously while the band played louder to hide the lack of applause.

But now, Winchell owns Broadway. He is effusively welcomed by night-club proprietors wherever he goes. Press agents, theatrical managers, and all the other scrambling figures of New York’s most slanting thoroughfare bid for his favor. At first, naturally enough, this was thrilling to an ex-hoofer. He made impressive stage entrances and was seated at the most prominent tables. Today, after more than a decade of it, he is a little bored. He sits in the semi-darkness of some obscure corner at the Stork Club or El Morocco and gloomily sips coffee — for he does not drink. He circulates among the Hot Spots much less than he once did. It is no longer necessary for him to rush around until dawn. For through-

out the city—indeed throughout the Republic—are scores of tipsters who are anxious to win his goodwill by supplying items for his column. Their reasons are excellent. A really good item about somebody else is a guarantee against a derogatory item concerning oneself at some future time.

This is Winchell's system and it is a sound one. He makes no threats, of course. There is no evidence, even, that he deliberately seeks to blacken those who fail to supply grist for his gossipy mill. On the other hand, he regards his informants as his sincere, true friends and he is loud in his expressions of gratitude to them.

"I need material all the time," he complains. "Often, twenty-four hours before my deadline, I am desperate over filling the column. I used to send telegrams to people asking if they had any news. Now I write letters. I try to think up a new dirty story to put in the letter. I figure that if I hand out a laugh, people will answer me."

So it isn't true that Winchell has a vast army of spies who receive substantial payments for the paragraphs which he prints. It isn't true, either, that his announcements of Blessed Events—the impending sons and daughters of the famous and the near-famous—

come from nurses and telephone operators in maternity hospitals.

"Ninety per cent of my Blessed Events come from the parents themselves," he says, "and the rest from their friends."

It will do no harm, all things considered, to reply promptly should you receive a request for news from Winchell; a note about some minor marital tangle in your neighborhood will do. It pays to be insured. On a Sunday night last Winter, Winchell was about to go on the air for his weekly broadcast. A small crowd had gathered at the studio of the National Broadcasting Company at Rockefeller Center. Five minutes before the zero hour a young man hurried in.

"I just got in from the West by plane and I came here as fast as I could from Newark," he told Winchell. "Maybe you can use this."

He produced a letter and they conferred in whispers as Winchell read it.

"Thanks, pal," the visitor said as he left. "I might not get that new contract if word of my marriage got out."

Walter had made a note or two. The letter, he pointed out, had disclosed that a Hollywood movie star was secretly in a Los Angeles

hospital with a nervous breakdown.

"What did your friend mean when he referred to his marriage?" I asked.

"Well," Winchell answered, "he's an actor. He's secretly married and I know it. He wants a movie contract and he's afraid news of his marriage might hurt him with the fans. I won't print it."

II

Nearing forty, Winchell still has the nervous grace of a dancer. He is thin; of medium height. His hair is prematurely gray. His eyes are blue and alert. He talks incessantly; nearly always about himself, for other subjects bore him. Most of all, Winchell enjoys talking about his very large earnings and points with pride to the probability that his income is greater than that of any other newspaperman. The figures are impressive, to say the least. His basic pay from the New York *Daily Mirror* is \$1000 a week, but he receives \$167 additional weekly because he does a column on Sunday.

"My contract is for six days," he curtly informed Arthur Brisbane, then editor of the tabloid. "If you want me on Sunday, you'll pay."

This check comes in every week of the year, but his largest salary now derives from broadcasting. Twice on Sunday night, at 9 o'clock for the East and at 11:15 for the Far West, Winchell yells out selections from his columns or other personal items. (On the whole they are much more innocuous than his printed tid-bits.) He is presented, in the honeyed tones of radio announcers, as the "one-man newspaper", as the editor of the *Jergens Journal*, and his sponsor is the Jergens soap and lotion company. They pay him, apparently gladly, \$3000 each week for a year of forty-eight weeks. Trivial, compared to this golden flood, is the revenue from the syndication of his newspaper column which goes to about 125 papers. The weekly total is \$450.

"They tell me I could be in a lot more papers," Winchell half-apologizes, "but that I'm in the best ones now."

Winchell's basic earnings from all these sources, then, total \$228,084. This coming year, in addition, he will receive \$75,000 from Twentieth Century-Fox for a movie in which he will act. A year or two ago he was paid \$25,000 by the same producers for an idea which was filmed under the title, *Broadway Through a Keyhole*.

So Winchell's own story is more fabulous, by far, than the most preposterous tale he has been able to uncover about Broadway. His name has variously been reported as Lipschitz, Hirshfield, and Bakst. But he insists that it really is Winchel and points to the fact that his mother was a Bakst. The rumor that he is named Hirshfield, he says, was his own fault.

"Harry Hirshfield, a fellow chit-chat writer," he explains, "once printed that my name was Lipschitz. I said, for a gag, that this wasn't so. I said my real name was Harry Hirshfield. Lots of people believed me. It doesn't pay to be funny."

He was born obscurely, then, as Walter Winchel on April 7, 1897, in New York City, of poor Jewish parents. The young hopeful had no interest at all in school and, being as brash as he was ignorant, sought a vaudeville career when only thirteen years old. He left the sixth grade to join a Gus Edwards troupe. For twelve years, his life was largely a combination of mediocrity and poverty. He had moments, though, of moderate success. Soon after the Armistice in 1918, he was playing, again with some blonde, in Chicago. The audience had its due proportion of doughboys.

"Walter!" droned the blonde, "what's your idea of a good time?"

"Watching a shipload of second lieutenants sinking," snapped Winchel — his name still had one *l*.

The applause was "terrific", he now recalls. So he tried a similar gag. President Wilson was arranging to go to Paris.

"Dearie," said his dancing partner, "the man I marry must be President of the United States some day!"

"That lets me out," he retorted. "I get seasick on boats."

Again the laughter crashed. The house manager was delighted and Walter soon found his name up in lights on the theater. The management spelled it wrong, though, with an additional final letter.

"I kind of liked it," Walter now says, "and so I kept it that way."

At twenty-five, Winchell was ambitious. He had an overwhelming desire to make money. And he had, unlike most hoofers, no great faith in his future in vaudeville. Somewhere among the Winchels or Baksts of the past there must have been a printer or journalist, for Walter had a definite vein of ink in his blood. He often said that he would like to be a newspaperman — a strange contradiction to his yearning for money. He gave expression to this desire while on

the road by issuing a bulletin called the *Daily Newsance*, and by pinning the single typewritten copy on the bulletin board of the theater where he was playing. The *Newsance* was the forerunner of his lucrative columns of today. It told of marriages, divorces, and births—he had not yet coined such fancy and vivid phrases as *sealed*, *renovated*, and *blessed event*. It offered, in addition, hints about hotels and eating places. The hamburgers at the Palace Kitchen Kar were the best in the Middle West, the *Newsance* would announce. The beds in Mrs. Casey's theatrical boarding house in Chicago were clean and soft.

Winchell slaved over each issue of the *Newsance* and tried to eliminate from his writing the more glaring grammatical errors. The little paper finally attracted the attention of Glenn Condon, who edited the *Vaudeville News*, a house organ for the E. F. Albee circuit. In 1922, during a four-week lay-off, the editor of the *Newsance* called on the editor of the *Vaudeville News* and asked for a job. He got one, at \$25 a week. Again he worked very hard. He pumped everybody for personal items. He was inordinately proud of each weekly issue and was heartbroken when some Albee executive—

scorning a house organ distributed without charge—tossed it into the wastebasket. Among Winchell's talents is the ability to remember, with a fierce clarity, injuries done him in the past.

"Some of the mugs who threw that paper away now ask me for favors," he says. "They never get them."

III

The boy was making good. After two years, during which his salary was increased a little, Winchell heard that Bernarr Macfadden was planning a new daily paper in Manhattan and that the editor would be Fulton Oursler, whom he had met. He promptly demanded a job, and received, on that strangest of all dailies, the *Evening Graphic*, five jobs rolled into one. He became dramatic editor, dramatic critic, amusement editor, amusement advertising solicitor, and Broadway columnist; he was paid \$100 a week for the batch. His Broadway column soon outstripped all the other departments in importance. Winchell, without being aware of it, had transformed a small-town column of "Personals" into a feature about New York theatrical life. His ears were always open. He knew, by now, a

vast variety of people. The circulation department of the *Evening Graphic* received reports that Winchell was winning readers.

A good many of the items in the Broadway column were unfriendly or scandalous. Threats of retaliation caused Winchell one or two bad moments. He referred rather slightly one day to the late Arnold Rothstein, the gambler, and was more than a little frightened when Rothstein invited him to call. Winchell had visions of a lonely automobile ride followed by sudden death in the wilds of Westchester County. He answered the summons, however. He was still apprehensive when Rothstein greeted him cordially.

"I wanted to meet you," the gambler said. "I like to know young men who are coming along in the world. I think your column is very good."

A large number of people have, no doubt, sworn vengeance on Walter Winchell for something he has printed. Husbands have promised to punch him in the nose. If all the lovers, bared to a curious world by Winchell, had actually carried out their threats to horse-whip him, there would have been a big boom in the whip business. He has, however, been set upon only once — unless a hysterical

punch by Al Jolson which did not hurt him is included. The attack took place outside a barber shop on Seventh Avenue just before Christmas, 1935. Two men jumped on him and bruised him slightly. Winchell is confident that they were agents of the Nazi regime and that they were annoyed by his frequently repeated slurs on Hitler. Friends in the police department are still working on the case and Winchell will never rest until the thugs have been caught and massaged with rubber hoses in the back room of some station house.

He has been singularly free of libel suits, too. The promoters of a beach club collected about \$15,000 when he said that their project was a racket. He libeled a wholly unknown carpenter in a Mid-Western city when he broadcast an item to the effect that the man had sawed off a tree limb on which he had carelessly been sitting, and had fallen to the ground. The carpenter said that this gravely damaged his professional reputation, but he compromised for \$100. There have been other small settlements. Libel suits, however, are merely a theoretical menace to Winchell because he is protected by the New York *Mirror* and his radio sponsor against personal liability. But he takes, of course, great care to avoid

them. His newspaper columns and his broadcasts are carefully checked by libel lawyers. He never accepts an item unless he is convinced that its source is reliable.

"Sometimes," he remarks sadly, "people give you a wrong steer. When I find that a contributor has done that, I never use his stuff again. I don't know why. It's like finding that a girl has been unfaithful."

The desire to escape libel is one reason for the strange phrases he has invented. It would clearly be dangerous to print that a certain couple is about to be divorced. Winchell is confident, though, that the courts will recognize no slur if he merely says that they are "on the verge". This, he thinks, is legally meaningless. Others among his phrases are simply reflections of Walter's real talent for slang — and a few of them are undoubtedly permanent in the English language. H. L. Mencken, in his scholarly *The American Language*, notes that *Chicagorilla* was one of Walter's inventions and pays solemn tribute to Winchell's importance as a creative philologist. The bright young men of *Time*, the Newsmagazine, undoubtedly owe an unpaid debt to Winchell. They are very fond of such Winchellisms as *cinemaddict* and *radiorator*.

IV

In 1929, Winchell was beguiled away from Macfadden's tawdry little tabloid to the slightly less tawdry Hearst stepchild, the *Daily Mirror*. His salary was fixed at \$500 a week and was soon increased to \$1000. It is assumed in newspaper circulation circles that Winchell is responsible for about 200,000 of the paper's 600,000 circulation, an enormous proportion for any one writer. I am sure that this is not an exaggeration. He still works very hard. He is up most of the night, partly because insomnia haunts him. His life is wholly irregular. Sometimes he will not eat breakfast until 6 or 7 o'clock at night; sometimes he is up by noon. If he has arisen in time, he will go down to the office at about 4 o'clock and write his column. But he more often has it ready the morning before the day of publication.

Walter reaches a high pitch of excitement during his Sunday night broadcasts. He loosens his collar and tie and pushes his soft felt hat to the back of his head. He himself manipulates the keys which simulate the sounds of telegraph and radio. "Flash!" he shouts into the microphone while he jiggles the key, and then relates some item about Glorious Gor-

geous of Hollywood or Mrs. Blue Blood of Park Avenue. Telegraph and radio operators frequently write in to protest that his dots and dashes mean nothing—as, of course, they don't—and that he ought to hire a real operator.

"We tried them and it didn't work," he says. "They were too slow. Besides, it stimulates me to do it myself."

It is a fairly exhausted ex-hooper who concludes the second of his broadcasts at 11:30 o'clock each Sunday night. Even then, however, his work is not done. He must visit at least one or two Hot Spots. He must find still more paragraphs for the yawning abyss which is his next day's column. Sometimes his rounds are made cheerful by a celebrity to whom he can show the town. No longer dazzled by figures of the stage or screen, Walter is still awed by men in the world of letters or by major personalities from Washington. He was very much pleased when Walter Durranty recently permitted himself to be taken around. He is often seen with J. Edgar Hoover, the G-man.

Winchell's friendship with Hoover is heightened by a passionate, almost adolescent, interest in policemen, detectives, and crime.

His only recreation, for he does not play games or take any exercise, is to roar through the streets of New York in an automobile in the early hours of gray dawn. The New York police have permitted him to install a radio in his car and on this he picks up the crimes and accidents broadcast to the radio patrols. When he hears an interesting announcement he will turn on a police siren, which he is also allowed to use, and rush to the scene of the holdup or murder. All this delights him. Like many a cub reporter, Walter is cop-crazy.

But he has, too, a sentimental side. He is very fond of his two small children and talks about them a great deal. On a night last Fall he was cruising through Harlem in his car when he received word of a stabbing on the lower West Side. Winchell stepped on the gas and sped down Central Park West with his siren piercing the quiet night. But as he approached Seventy-second Street he cut off the siren.

"Why did you do that?" his companion asked.

"My children are asleep in that apartment house," Walter answered. "I don't want to wake them up."

ABORTION: THE \$100,000,000 RACKET

By A. J. RONGY

PHYSICIANS and sociologists today are appalled by the vast increase in the American abortion traffic—a traffic swiftly approaching the fantastic proportions of a one-hundred-million-dollar-a-year industry. It is conservatively estimated that more than 1,000,000 abortions are performed annually in the Republic, and that in the metropolitan areas there is one abortion for every recorded birth. But despite the fearsome toll of women maimed, crippled, and killed by illegal surgery, the subject of abortion is still rigorously exorcised by the zealous elders who guard public morality. Open discussion of the evil is relegated to the category of vulgarity. Mrs. Grundy insists that the unpleasant word be confined to a negligible paragraph in the dictionary.

Physicians, naturally, are in the best position to appreciate the enormity of the abortion evil. They are able to comprehend what a canker the traffic is rapidly becoming and how definitely it is engrafting itself upon our social order. Yet

even the most serious treatises on the evil, written by medical men, are blanketed with a fog of hypocrisy. Some years ago when I wrote the first medico-sociological book on the subject to be published in the United States, the so-called best people were in a panic to avoid it, for it was an indubitable challenge to the smug attitude which Society and organized medicine have long maintained towards the abortion racket. Mr. Havelock Ellis praised my book in England; but over here the august *New York Times* refused to allow the publisher to advertise it.

Nevertheless, abortion cannot be wished out of existence. No amount of neglect, no campaign of deliberate oversight, no enforced avoidance, can conceal the fact that hundreds of thousands of American women resort to abortion, year in and year out, and will continue to do so unless some remedy for their predicament is supplied. There are always circumstances, whether social or economic, that impose upon these women the ne-

cessity for interruption of pregnancy; and there are always many unscrupulous skilled and semi-skilled medical men ready to do their bidding.

Just how many women have recourse to abortions, just how many licensed and unlicensed doctors and midwives are engaged in the traffic, is a debatable question. The mere fact that abortion "officially" is not done makes it impossible to secure accurate statistics. But my experience leads me to believe that in every metropolitan district, there is not a single family which has not been brought in contact with the problem of abortion, either through a member of the family, or through intimate friends and free-speaking neighbors. Varied figures have been given on the total number of operations. Dr. Fred J. Taussig estimates on the basis of 2,500,000 annual confinements in the United States, that there are over 700,000 abortions. He adds, however, that this is certainly an understatement. I am convinced the figure falls far short of the actual total, which probably approximates 1,500,000.

Hospital statistics have shown that of every 100 women treated for abortion, forty-three have had at least one operation, thirty-four have had two, eleven have had

three, and one has had from four to fifteen. The number of criminal abortions in metropolitan districts must certainly approximate the number of live-born children, especially among women in the upper strata of society. And as for the revenue that finds its way into the hands of abortionists, it probably totals — conservatively estimated — \$100,000,000 a year.

Mortality statistics are still more striking. Dr. Julius Levy of the New Jersey Department of Health has estimated that abortion is responsible for at least twenty per cent of the total maternal mortality and sixty per cent of the deaths in the first six months of pregnancy. Dr. Taussig has found that forty-five per cent of all deaths due to puerperal septicemia were preceded by abortion, and that the death rate from infection is seven times higher in abortions than in childbirth. Furthermore, every clinician knows that, for each case which terminates fatally following a criminal abortion, there are at least five or six cases which become so invalidated that sooner or later the patients must undergo major operations.

In short, there are enough startling facts and figures available to make every theologian, legislator, physician, and socially-minded citi-

zen pause and ask: What has brought about this condition of dangerous law-breaking?

II

When people violated the Volstead Act, it was because they enjoyed drinking; they considered it a pleasure tyrannically denied. But women do not like abortion. It isn't pleasant; it is painful. Also it is costly. It is dangerous when carried out in the usual clandestine fashion. Why, then, this large-scale failure to conform to the law? There is only one answer.

The average woman who submits to abortion, and thereby runs the hazard of death, of possible exposure, of involvement with the law, does so only because she has compelling reasons. Against these reasons no amount of condemnation by those who preach the Gospel and no threat of direct action by the law can be of much avail. Consider the following records of actual cases:

1. A thirteen-year-old girl of a respected family was impregnated by a high-school boy. The price demanded by an abortionist was prohibitive, beyond the means of her father, a university teacher. Hence the girl went through a most difficult labor which permanently invalidated her. Needless to say, life to this child be-

came a tragic existence and the entire family is now on the brink of ruin, both financially and socially.

2. A woman who had previously been delivered of three children by Caesarean section, accidentally became pregnant again. At the hospital she was refused an abortion. Subsequently she went to a midwife, who aborted her. Sepsis set in and she died.

3. A married woman of thirty-eight, the mother of three children, was informed by her physician, three weeks after her husband's death, that she was three months' pregnant. She was horror-struck; she was not fit mentally nor able economically to bear another child. The doctor informed her that the law makes no exception for women in her situation. She procured an illegal abortion. Final results unknown.

4. A girl of seventeen was impregnated by her father. The mother became apprised of it and she and the daughter rushed off to Europe, where they arranged for the confinement. While abroad, the mother wrote to friends that she had become interested in a newborn orphan, a distant relative, whom she planned to adopt and bring back to New York. The child is now being brought up in the household as the adopted daughter of her own father and grandmother. One does not require great imagination to visualize the anomalous situation in that household and the miserable life the young girl has been condemned to because of the abortion laws.

These are but a few examples of the many problems that a physician confronts in connection with undesired pregnancies.

Ordinarily, one would expect legislation to catch up, however slowly, with social demands. That it has not done so in connection with abortion is the result chiefly of the religious taboos which still exert an enormous influence upon legislators. But what is most puzzling is that it does not seem possible to carry the legal strictures into effect. Of the physicians—possibly two or three per cent of the medical profession—who engage in the abortion traffic, only an infinitesimally small number is ever seriously embroiled with the law. There is, of course, a great deal of graft and corruption, but the more fundamental reason is that the public does not lend a hand to the legislators' interdictions against the abortionists. A large body of citizens obviously does not take the viewpoint that the interruption of an unwelcome pregnancy, in itself, involves any act of moral turpitude. If the abortion is done without public scandal and if it does not result in a fatality, the community condones it.

During one ten-year period of this century, only three abortionists were convicted and sentenced, and all were later pardoned. In the case of one, the jury brought in an acquittal, their view being that the abortion was highly successful and

that a successful abortion is a good thing. Since the Medical Grievance Committee of the State of New York has been organized, only one physician has lost his license because of abortion work.

In short, laws against abortion are practically nullified. Conviction in most cases must depend upon the testimony of the woman upon whom the operation was performed, and such testimony is not likely to be forthcoming. The woman simply refuses to offer damaging evidence which may involve herself. Furthermore, in extreme cases, even when the woman is willing to testify against the doctor, the accused invariably manages to plead all sorts of subterfuges for performing the operation, and not infrequently men of standing in the medical profession are ready to substantiate him. This has a telling effect upon the jury, so that the prosecuting attorney usually does not have the means of contradicting such evidence. And in general the abortion traffic has become so important that the abortionists know just what to do and what not to do in order to escape the law. The entire subject, the Law and Abortion, therefore remains suspended in limbo, hovering in an inaccessible region where the social code, human prejudices,

and other imponderables clash with the strict letter of the law.

III

Not the least of the bad effects of abortion have been on the medical profession itself. Young doctors frequently become the prey of women who seek to have illegal operations performed. They are often tempted into illegal practice, for no other field offers such lucrative inducements to the young medico. Some doctors undertake to become abortionists with the mental reservation that as soon as they have obtained a sufficient competence, they will quit the business for legitimate practice. But the experience of the past offers a refutation to that hope. It is a rarity for a criminal abortionist to forsake his specialty and return to legitimate medicine. Before long he discovers that his income is too large to be given up easily. Furthermore, the practice is not a difficult one. It does not involve the usual hardships in the life of a medical man. Patients come flocking and in the space of a few hours he may collect enormous fees. The cost of an abortion ranges from \$50 to \$250 or more. One of the fashionable Park Avenue practitioners in Manhattan, before the Depression,

charged a minimum fee of \$2000. A skilled abortionist can perform a number of operations in a day. Therefore a condition develops that unfits the abortionist for a return to legitimate practice, with its customary difficulties and its customary \$3 fees.

Another important contributing factor to the increased number of abortions, especially among the middle classes, is so-called birth control propaganda, and the confidence that is being placed by a great majority of women in the effectiveness of the various contraceptive devices popularized by birth control clinics. They help to develop a false sense of security. But a mishap will occur, pregnancy will ensue when it is least expected, and will be terminated by abortion. It is not generally known that *there is no contraceptive device utilized by the wife that will insure against pregnancy.*

Medical opinion on the subject of abortion is hard to establish. The physician is reluctant to give public expression to any radical views. Consequently, when confronted with the problem of abortion, the medical fraternity either turns evasive or gives a mumbling assent to the prevailing morality. So far as one can judge, however, a good many physicians in their own

minds favor some liberalization of the laws. No matter how callous the average physician may appear, he is not unaffected by the pitiful pleadings of women to whom a pregnancy is a genuine cause of distress. The law-observing physician under present circumstances must close his ears to the pleas, but his private opinion is at variance with the attitude forced upon him by the law and the medical code.

The time certainly has come when enlightened public opinion must make some adjustment to the clamorous demand on the part of women not to be forced to give birth to children under circumstances which put a social stigma on them or when they are impoverished. The public must begin to take cognizance of the tragedies, the corruption, and the ravages the abortion racket is producing.



CITY EVENING AFTER RAIN

BY HOWARD MCKINLEY CORNING

ARRESTED wind that slides along the leaf
 Turns earthward now. On every branch a sheer
 Clean silver catches fire and sharply brief
 Weaves in and out. Amorphous night is here.
 The pendent fruited lamps at corners swing
 Against the frustrate gauze of dusk. The sound
 Of late last rain seeps gutterward; no thing
 But sinks toward dissolution underground.

From day, that with the rain's slow passing gave
 Strange radiance to the dark, lit flower-wise,
 The patient and ironic mind, the brave
 And steadfast pulse seeks light: familiar eyes
 Peer starward, and, if heavenward turned in vain,
 'A constellated tree shakes down its rain.

HOW TO MAKE FLYING SAFE

By KENNETH BROWN COLLINGS

FLYING is certainly less hazardous than it was three years ago. At that time, a given hour spent as a passenger on an American commercial air line was about sixty-six times more likely to result fatally than the same hour spent in normal ground occupations. The present hazard is about forty times normal. The danger of death to commercial pilots—which was approximately eighty-eight times normal per hour of flight—has been reduced by about twenty per cent.

But, while the foregoing is gratifying as denoting progress, we should not allow it to mislead us into thinking that commercial flying has now taken its place among the safe methods of transportation. From the standpoint of safety some improvement has been registered—but not enough to justify uncontrolled paeans of praise. So that, before giving unreserved credit for the progress where credit is due, it is well to investigate the things which have *not* been done to further the safety of aviation and

to ascertain whether the blame does not lie on the same shoulders which should otherwise receive the credit. To do this, we shall have to review briefly the causes of airplane accidents.

There are several types of disaster, and they often overlap in a manner baffling to the uninitiated. The one underlying cause of accident, however, is that all flying is a defiance of the law of gravity. Man is only enabled to hold that law in leash and fly at all, because the air, which at rest is a fluid, takes on certain characteristics of a solid when combined with high speeds. At such speeds, the air will support an airplane in flight, but any attempt to fly slower than the legitimate minimum results in disaster: the force of gravity is no longer nullified; it assumes immediate command of the situation; the airplane goes out of control, falls, and crashes. So, no matter what the emergency, the plane cannot slow down or stop without first finding a landing area that is big enough—and smooth enough—to con-

tact at a minimum speed of about fifty miles an hour.

Gravity also causes the disastrous aftermath of aerial collisions. These are not frequent as yet, but they are increasing as the number of planes increases, and they must be considered. At the speeds at which aircraft are compelled to travel, the least contact between two of them—contact such as might logically smash a fender were the vehicles automobiles—is likely to rupture the supporting surface or disrupt the control system of both. Here again, the inability of the plane to stop and repair the damage will—barring the use of parachutes—usually result fatally.

The law of gravity, then, is the underlying cause of air disasters, but there are numerous contributing causes. There is bad weather and the failure of blind flying instruments. There is motor failure, fuel failure, and rarely, in recent types of airplanes, structural failure. Too frequently, there is human failure—both by flying and ground personnel—and there is an almost limitless variety of combinations of all these.

Within certain limits, the aviation industry has worked diligently to eliminate the failures and overcome the hazards of flight. But its

activities along these lines do raise the question as to whether its real interest is the saving of human lives, or the making of returns on investment. Or perhaps there is a third possibility: it is entirely believable that in their efforts to attain the often incompatible objectives of immediate profits, ultimate profits, and safety, the air line officials have become slightly muddled in their own minds. One of their difficulties is that while they know that flying is still dangerous, they believe that their financial survival depends on keeping that knowledge from the public. Proceeding on that premise, they are limited, in their efforts to promote safety, to those devices and activities which in no way call attention to existing dangers. They are thus prohibited from installing parachutes, because that act would shout from the housetops that airplanes sometimes crash. The mere mention of parachutes causes panic among the operators: they resort to subterfuge, and even to a flat denial that the use of parachutes by commercial air passengers would save any lives. Nevertheless, there are now enough air disasters on record where parachutes definitely *would* have saved many lives to render such arguments ridiculous.

II

The air lines pioneered in the development of blind flying instruments, and hailed the requirements of the Bureau of Air Commerce that all air line pilots be trained in their use, as a "milestone towards safety". Here again, there is considerable question as to whether the real factor underlying their joy was safety, or the increased ability of the lines to maintain schedules regardless of weather. The cancelling of a scheduled flight had numerous bad effects on profits. The least of these was the refund of the purchase price of tickets for that particular flight. Probably the greatest was the loss of confidence in the reliability of air transport on the part of disappointed passengers. The next time these disgruntled individuals wanted to get anywhere, they were quite likely to take a train.

Blind flying changes that. If the landing fields at the destination of a scheduled flight and at the point of departure have sufficient ceiling, the plane usually takes off. The fact that the pilot will have to fly blind for a period of several hours between the two places—frequently over mountains—makes no difference; he has the training

and the equipment. In addition to his instruments, he has two-way radio communication with the ground and a radio beam to lead him. In theory, nothing can go wrong.

In practice, plenty of things go wrong—and the results are sometimes fatal. Once a pilot plunges into the "soup" he is completely dependent on his motors, his instruments, his skill, and his nerves. Modern transport planes are usually twin-motored and are able to fly on one motor in case the other fails. That removes much of the old hazard of engine failure, but it in no wise insures against the failure of delicate instruments or the still more delicate nerves of the pilot. Those two failures go hand in hand. Blind flying necessitates a difficult mental process to begin with: the pilot must force himself to ignore the dictates of his brain as to direction and equilibrium. If followed, these impulses will invariably lead him astray, just as men lost in the woods circle in their efforts to walk a straight line. Modern pilots know this and depend entirely on their instruments; many of them claim that they have trained themselves to the point where they can fly by instrument for many hours and feel no urge to check up on the ground. That

may be true in general, but the concentration involved becomes more wearing on the pilot as time passes, and if a suspicion that one or more of his instruments has gone haywire implants itself in his brain, the best of aviators will get fidgety. Fatal accidents still happen because a pilot's nerves snap and the urge to see the earth becomes overpowering. In its official findings relative to the air line crash which killed twelve people near Uniontown, Pennsylvania, last April, the Bureau of Air Commerce said that the probable cause was poor judgment on the part of the pilot in flying by visual ground observation methods after having descended through the clouds in mountainous terrain at a point unknown to him.

Had that pilot continued to fly by instrument, the accident probably would not have happened. Here, then, we have a failure of the human element. There is no way to prove what caused another recent fatal crash — where a pilot flew into the ground in soupy weather — but it is quite possible that it was the exact reverse of the Uniontown disaster. This plane crashed within a few minutes of a semi-blind take-off; if the pilot's instruments were out of adjustment on leaving the ground, he

did not have time or the opportunity to discover that fact. He merely flew what his instruments told him was the correct course — and landed in the next world. Blind flying, then, has undoubtedly been a prime factor in making America's air lines the world's leaders in schedule maintenance, but that laudable accomplishment should not be allowed to becloud the fact that, from a standpoint of pure safety, there is some doubt whether it saves the lives of more passengers than it kills.

III

The crash which killed four passengers — including Senator Bronson Cutting of New Mexico — is an excellent example of the overlapping causes of disaster. It also gives a working example of the devices which have been installed to avert such tragedies, and of their failure. Finally, it offers the perfect example of a combination of circumstances in which parachutes — if provided — would undeniably have saved all lives.

The plane was approaching Kansas City. The pilot had been informed, over his two-way radio set, that the weather at that city's airport would be suitable for a landing. He arrived over the field

to find that either the weather forecasting or its reporting, or both, had been faulty; the ground was obscured by fog. He circled over the airport and awaited instructions from the ground. His radio receiver was in order but his sending apparatus had now failed.

The ground officials could get no word from the pilot, but they knew that the standing orders of the air line were to the effect that all planes must carry a certain reserve supply of gasoline above the requirements of the scheduled flight. Hence, they directed the pilot to proceed to the next emergency landing field, which was reported clear, and was within the plane's supposed fuel radius. The pilot started for the emergency field but never reached it. Through some error, he did not have the estimated fuel reserve. About half an hour later, while still in thick weather, he ran out of gas and had to nose over to maintain flying speed. He flew into the ground and four people were killed.

There are so many failures in that picture that it is useless to try to separate them. But one protrudes like a sore thumb: the failure to provide parachutes. The air lines advance as a principal negative argument the "fact" that there is never-time to use them—but

half an hour elapsed from the time this plane arrived over Kansas City until it crashed. And that is sufficient to use even the slowest of manually-operated parachutes. Admittedly, the use of manual type parachutes—in which the wearer must voluntarily jump from the plane and then pull the ripcord—offers difficulties. These 'chutes require considerable altitude to work, especially if a large number of passengers has to be unloaded and any one of them is reluctant about jumping. In the foregoing case, there was ample time and ample altitude, but that will not always be true, and it is one of the reasons why the ideal parachute for air line use is not the manual, but the automatic type.

The automatic consists of a 'chute which is enclosed in the cushion of the passenger's chair: the air traveler is not required to do anything to put it in operation. Beneath each seat there is a trap-door; the doors are controlled by a master lever in the pilot's cockpit. When the pilot pulls that lever, the doors open, the passengers drop through the openings—chairs and all—in a timed rotation so that the devices will not foul each other, and the 'chutes automatically open. It has been demonstrated in actual tests that

by using this device, multiple passengers can be safely unloaded at altitudes below 500 feet. They can even be unloaded while the plane is spinning; in fact, the spin makes the task easier, for in that maneuver, the centrifugal force is downward and outward. When the trapdoors are sprung in a spin, the parachute-equipped passengers are, therefore, thrown away from the path of the plane and they thus avoid all danger of collision.

But the mere mention of this device is sufficient to give any air line official the jitters. "Yes," some of them admit, off the record, "it probably would save a few lives. But we might just as well go out of business the day we install it. To get passengers, we have got to stress the fact that flying is safe. The presence of parachutes implies the opposite: that danger impends. But, man, those automatic things under the seats are *poison*; no one is going to ride in an airplane knowing that at any second the pilot can heave him into space!"

Rightly or wrongly, that fear dominates the air transport officials; it is perhaps the greatest factor in their objections to parachutes. But other factors contribute: the weight of the parachutes would detract from the payload and the 'chutes themselves are expensive —

about \$250 each. And the changes in design of existing air transports necessary to install them could easily spoil a year's maintenance and operations budget. It was a somewhat similar situation that delayed for many years the adoption by American railroads of the four great safety devices of railroading: steel cars, automatic couplers, air brakes, and automatic block signals. All railroad men now admit that these are indispensable adjuncts of their business and many of them realized that fact at a time when they were still refusing to install them. It was all well and good, they said, for editors and legislators to praise the safety provided by, say, steel cars, for praise was cheap. But take the specific problem confronting the treasurer of a railroad suddenly faced with the demand that he junk all his wooden cars and raise the funds necessary to purchase steel replacements. That was a very tangible problem, and from his standpoint, hopeless of solution. Nevertheless, all four devices were finally forced on the railroads by mandatory legislation, and in one way or another, the lines financed the changes and survived.

There is one more financial angle to the operators' objections to parachutes. That is the fact that

the pilots of parachute-equipped planes would be tempted to unload their passengers before they had exhausted all other alternatives. After dumping his passengers, a pilot would either have to jump himself—thus wrecking an \$80,000 plane—or stick to the lightened plane and try to get down safely. If he did succeed in landing, the operators fear that the passengers might make that fact the basis of costly lawsuits. They might try to prove that their own uncerecermonious dumping—and consequent exposure to the elements—was unwarranted. So they might, and it is possible that they might collect. But that, like the other financial objections, proves only that parachutes might be expensive; it in no wise refutes the fact that they would save lives.

The entire subject of the hazards of air travel can be summarized thus: improved equipment, more experience, and increased knowledge have lessened the dangers of flight, but they have not altered the law of gravity. All the present

efforts directed toward the elimination of errors and failures are laudable and should be continued, but despite them, mishaps will occur in flying just as in all other methods of transportation. No human agency can keep an airplane aloft while repairs are effected. That being the case, it is not fair that the flying public should, for financial or any other reasons, be denied the final measure of safety offered by parachutes, the only lifesavers of the air. As to the plea that people would not travel in planes thus equipped, that can easily be settled by the people themselves. The Bureau of Air Commerce should disregard any negative pressure from the air transport companies and order the immediate installation of parachutes on a trial route. This would offer the maximum of air safety and afford the public the opportunity of deciding for itself whether it wished to take advantage of a firmer lease on life. Life preservers are no more necessary to ocean liners than parachutes are to air liners.



RUSSIA'S PRIVATE WAR IN SPAIN

BY LAWRENCE DENNIS

THE significant peculiarity of the Spanish civil war is that it is actually a fight to the finish between Communism and nationalism on Spanish territory. The fight is the more bitter because both sides understand that the loser will not have a return bout. As in all revolutions, it has been a struggle between the Outs and the Ins, with government, of course, on the defensive. This inevitable role of government has been exploited in a way to obscure the larger fact that Communism, rather than the Government, has been the chief object of attack by the revolutionists. Thus we have had in Spain an example of Moscow's new Popular Front strategy, which is now endeavoring, wherever possible, to identify World Revolution with legality and the defense of Liberal institutions and democratic government. All these things, of course, a triumphant Communism necessarily destroys. Furthermore, the diversity of the Spanish revolutionary factions, as well as their many incompatibilities, have been

used to conceal the two essential elements of their unity; namely, a common hatred of Communism and a common devotion to peculiarly national values. The American press has not stressed the point that Spain is the battleground of one revolution *versus* another, or of national *versus* international revolution. Nor has it emphasized that the Madrid Government has fallen under the control of men who take orders from the Moscow Communist International, which is dedicated to the cause of World Revolution.

It is too early to foresee the outcome of the death struggle between Communism and its nationalistic foes now going on in different phases throughout Europe and Asia — the Spanish civil war being, at this writing, merely the momentarily important military phase in one country of this worldwide contest. The unhappy events in Spain, however, clearly furnish the basis of four useful conclusions. The first is that wherever Communism becomes an important fac-

tor, it tends to bring about a civil war, even though, at the time the war starts, the Communists are only a relatively small minority, without legal control of government or any of its major departments. The second conclusion is that if a national crisis arises or a civil war breaks out in a country in which Communism is strong, even though the Communists are only a minority party, the civil war will inevitably resolve itself into a conflict between Communism and its antitheses. It will so happen no matter how numerous and important the other incidental clashes of factions, regions, religions, economic interests, and powerful personalities. The third conclusion is that once Communism is made the issue in a civil war, Russia becomes involved as the backer of the Communists and their allies. The fourth conclusion, corollary to the third, is that once Russia has thrown her hat into the ring, the nations having most to fear from Russia and the spread of Communism—Germany and Italy in Europe, and Japan in Asia—also become involved.

II

Now as for the first conclusion, that Communism produces civil

war as soon as it is important enough to produce anything worthy of note, the contrary and widely-held view of the Spanish civil war is that the Spanish Communists were just so many good citizens, playing quietly at democratic, parliamentary, constitutional, popular government, who were suddenly set upon by a couple of military adventurers, aided by bands of foreign legionaries and Moorish mercenaries. The fallaciousness of this interpretation can be comprehended only if one is willing to take a realistic view of all the known facts about Communism, which, in its very essence, always and in all places, in one phase or another, with one strategy or another, is World Revolution. Good Communists cannot own allegiance to any non-Communist State or participate in good faith in the political processes of any Liberal, democratic government.

There is no excuse for ignorance or disregard of these facts about Communism, which are explicitly set forth by all its authorized exponents and publications and which are invariably proclaimed with clarity and vigor at every important Communist meeting. The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, held at Moscow, July 25 to August 21,

1935, definitely outlined the new Popular Front strategy in terms which are irreconcilable with the wishfully-thought-out explanations of present-day Liberals and anti-Fascists to the general effect that Communism is going Liberal. Evidence of this Liberal trend is said to be found in the new Soviet Constitution, notwithstanding the fact that the Constitution recognizes the Communist mission to advance the World Revolution and tolerates in Russia no anti-Communist group.

Communist participation in Popular Front governments in France and Spain and the fact that Communists are no longer told to mutiny in capitalist armies, but rather to fight bravely in such armies whenever the enemy is Fascist, are cited as further proofs of the Liberal trend of Moscow. To comprehend, however, the true meaning of Communist participation in Popular Front governments, let us turn not to the Liberal apologists of Communism but to the Communist leader Dimitrov, making a keynote report on agenda to the Communist International Congress of 1935. He said, among other things:

Therefore, we draw attention to the possibility of creating a government of the anti-Fascist, United Front, un-

der conditions of the political crisis. We Communists will support such a government with all the means at our disposal [this the Communists have been doing recently in Spain and France] to the extent to which it really leads the struggle against the enemies of the people [all capitalists, whether Liberals or Fascists] and allows freedom of action to the working class and the Communist Party. [Note that this is a highly-qualified support of national governments and not the unqualified loyalty required by every national oath of citizenship.] And, as soldiers of the Revolution [not of Spain or France] we shall fight in the front-line trenches. But we tell the masses quite openly that this Government cannot bring about a final solution. It is not in a position to overthrow the rule of the exploiting class, and therefore cannot definitely remove the danger of a Fascist counter-revolution. It is therefore unavoidable that one should arm for the Socialist Revolution. Only Soviet rule will bring about the final solution. In the third place, this union is only possible on the condition that one recognizes that the Revolutionary overthrow of the rule of the Bourgeoisie is indispensable as well as the setting-up of the proletarian dictatorship in the form of Soviet rule.

Referring again to these agenda of the Congress of the Communist International of 1935, Dimitrov compared the new policy to the strategy of the Trojan horse, saying:

And the attacking army, which had suffered no slight losses, could not be victorious until it succeeded in penetrating the heart of the enemy with the aid of the Trojan horse. We Revo-

lutionary workers should not hesitate to apply the same tactics (those of the Popular Front) against our Fascist enemy, who is protecting himself from the people.

Voroshilov, head of the Red Army and the probable successor of Stalin, said on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Red Army:

Our army is the advance guard of the World Proletariat. Our army is an international army. By victories in other countries also, the Proletarian Revolution will create new detachments of Red troops. The Red Army is the advance guard of the armed forces of the World Revolution.

The same ideas and sentiments may be found expressed in innumerable public utterances of Lenin, Stalin, and all the Soviet leaders.

It follows, therefore, that once the Communists of any country have succeeded in carrying out Moscow's instructions to the extent of driving a large entering wedge into the parliamentary system of that nation, they thereby create a situation in which their officially-proclaimed program and policies become of vital concern to the people whom Communism proposes literally to destroy. Specifically and tersely stated, the Communist policy in the Popular Front strategy is (a) To maintain perfect party discipline for the waging of World

Revolution under the orders of Moscow; (b) To do or get done everything possible to cripple or destroy the nationalist leaders and movements, legally if possible, illegally if not; (c) To shape foreign policy in a way to strengthen the hand of Moscow in international diplomacy.

It is a great mistake to belittle the importance of Communism in Spain or France because of its relatively small following a year ago in Spain or today in France — around twenty per cent of the total vote. Let it be recalled that in the last election held before the Communists seized power through a violent *coup d'état* in Russia in 1917, they polled only 6,000,000 votes as against 24,000,000 cast for the Liberal-Social reformers and 4,000,000 for the more conservative candidates. With the same percentage of voters, which they have had for over a year in both Spain and France, the Communists would need only a few lucky breaks and a little good leadership, such as they had in Russia in 1917, to come to power in either of the two countries.

So it happened, quite naturally, that many of those in Spain marked for destruction by the Communists — all owners of productive property and holders of

religious beliefs are so marked—decided last Summer not to let the Communist Trojan Horse program proceed any further in Spain without challenge. Thus came the revolution. (Anyone who thinks my term “marked for destruction” too strong is referred to any of many reliable compilations of the mass-executions of ecclesiastics, nuns, and seminarians by Spanish Government defenders. Michael Williams, in the December issue of *Current History*, describes innumerable explicit dispatches and eye-witness reports attesting the murder of more than 400 religious cult practitioners, virtually all Roman Catholics, for no other reason than their religious beliefs.)

In France and Belgium, Communism has been running similarly true to form. So far, the result in France has not yet been revolution against the Popular Front Government, but it is to be observed that Belgium's recent denunciation of her military alliance with France has been one of the sequels of the growing Communist influence over French foreign policy. The Communist war on all French nationalists has turned J. Doriot, a former Communist who was expelled from the Communist Party because being a Frenchman first and a Socialist second he

would not take orders from Moscow, into the leader of the French Popular Party, which is receiving hundreds of recruits daily from both the propertied and the working classes. Doriot declared publicly on October 10, 1936:

The plan of the French Communists is only too evident. They want to use the Popular Front to get rid of the forces hostile to their policies. Through the Popular Front their plan is to destroy all centers of resistance. They demand heads and the imprisonment of the chiefs of all French nationalist parties, dissolution of these parties, purification of the police, army, and administrative branches. Thus they try to clear the road of all obstacles that prevent them from getting to power.

In France today the leading nationalists have to fear immediate reprisals by the Popular Front Government; all capitalists, peasant land-owners, and religious believers have to fear eventual liquidation by a triumphant French Communism; and all able-bodied Frenchmen have to fear being sent to foreign battlefields to fight the battles of Moscow and the World Revolution. As *Figaro* of Paris recently said:

Everybody knows that for the last few months the Soviet Comintern has been trying to awaken a belligerent spirit in the French Communists in the hope of precipitating a conflict between France and Germany.

The elimination of Communism as a political factor in France may at any time now appear to these menaced Frenchmen, who do not share the Communist faith, to be essential to keeping France from being drawn into a foreign war in defense of Russia or becoming the battlefield of the Marxian class struggle.

If, as in Spain, those marked by Communism for destruction should decide in France that the Communist Trojan Horse strategy had gone far enough, such a decision would certainly have the fullest doctrinal support of the highest Communist authority, Lenin, who declared as far back as November 26, 1920, that "as long as Capitalism and Socialism exist side by side, we cannot live in peace. One or the other will finally triumph". Or the supporting evidence of the Declaration of the Communist International Congress of 1928 which declared: "Our program openly flings a challenge for war unto death to the entire bourgeois world." The only important difference between 1936 and 1928 or 1920, so far as this program and its execution are concerned, is that Russia has today a larger army, more war planes, and a better fighting establishment than ever before.

Thus, as a domestic problem, Communism sooner or later presents those whom it would destroy with the choice of taking effective measures to eliminate this peril as a growing force, or allowing it to pursue quietly and successfully its Trojan Horse policy under the protection of laws intended to safeguard the rights of those who own allegiance to the Liberal, constitutional system. The Communists, of course, can own no such allegiance, but must have a first loyalty to the Communist International at Moscow. Once Communism gets the foothold it had in Spain on the outbreak of the civil war, or that it has today in France, its elimination as a growing force may mean a *coup d'état* or a civil war started by its foes on the Right. But those menaced by Communism in such a situation will have to fight or perish, sooner or later, anyway. The longer they allow the Trojan Horse strategy to proceed successfully, the stronger will grow the Communist fighting potential and the weaker that of the anti-Communist forces, ever retreating in a series of defensive rearguard actions. The only good defense is an offensive.

At present the Communist minorities in countries like France

probably want no early test of strength. And the mother Communist country doubtless wishes no test of strength on fairly equal terms with powerful foes like Germany and Japan. But the Communist minorities and the Communist mother country naturally expect an early offensive by the Right, because, being intensely logical themselves, they credit their enemies with equal reasoning powers. They, however, are not without hopes, based largely on the weakness and inconsistency of the tolerant Liberals, that the irrepressible conflict may be postponed for some time, thus allowing Russia and the Communist minorities in the Liberal democracies more time to prepare for *Der Tag*. They also have reasons for hoping that their future victims, the Liberals and the Fascists, may be goaded into engaging each other in mutually destructive warfare. This would make them easy pickings for the Communist minorities, aided by the hordes of the Red Army, which are now being trained to sweep across Europe like Attila's Huns when the time is ripe.

III

Our second conclusion that, once Communism becomes an impor-

tant factor in a country, it must be the central issue in that country's crises and civil wars, needs little arguing after what has been pointed out above or in the light of daily press reports emanating from Spain at this writing. This self-evident conclusion is useful in refuting the arguments of many Liberals and conservatives, who, although utterly unsympathetic to Communism, favor an alliance with Russia against Germany, Italy, and Japan. For such persons the Spanish civil war teaches that although the Spanish Communists were a minority element supporting the Government before the outbreak of the revolution, they have, in the course of the fighting, assumed supreme military command of their allies. It was a similar capture of the fighting forces by the Communists under Krensky's regime which ended Liberal government and began the Soviet Dictatorship in Russia in 1917.

The moral of these two precedents should be meditated by those Liberals who favor alliance with and support of Russia. Any military alliance between the Liberal democracies and the Communist Dictatorship for World Revolution seems foredoomed to complete domination ultimately by the Communists, who would necessarily be

the more virile force in such an alliance. It must so happen, because Communism is a militant and intolerant philosophy eminently suited to waging war, while Liberal internationalism is not such a philosophy and never can be. Liberalism won the last war for Communism and Fascism, but lost it for Liberalism. The Red Army today is composed of indoctrinated fanatics, led by officers trained as much in proselyting as in fighting. Draft armies, as the American wartime Alpha intelligence tests showed, are composed in large part of morons. The Liberal democracies have no ample cadres of leaders who, in the prolonged contacts and fraternization with Communists of several years' war on the European continent, could match in propaganda and rabble-rousing either the technique or emotional power of the Communists.

No system characterized by virile thinking, virile feeling, and virile acting would for a moment tolerate within its gates, as do the Liberal democracies today, an enemy of Liberalism such as Communism. The only virile systems in the world today are those of an anti-Communist nationalism or an anti-nationalist Communism. When they clash, those who seek a middle or third course are

doomed. The only hope for the tolerant internationalist and anti-nationalist lies in the avoidance of this clash in his country. His dilemma is that he cannot avoid this clash and remain tolerant of Communism—for once Communism becomes important, it becomes a fighting issue. The clash might be avoided for some time in the United States where Communism is still far from being an important factor: but, alas, our Liberal Americans are doing their utmost to enlist our sympathies on the side of the Communists in the worldwide fight between Communism and anti-Communist nationalism. What they utterly fail to see is that whatever the part they may get America to play in this worldwide fight, and whoever wins, they, the Liberals, will certainly lose in any event. Logically, in their own best interests, the Liberals of America, England, and France should be ardent isolationists, realizing that in any clash between two mutually virile ideologies, the tolerant Liberal is inevitably doomed. But perhaps the will-to-survive goes only with virile thinking.

IV

Our two final conclusions drawn from the Spanish tragedy are

corollaries: Once Communism becomes an issue in a nation's crisis or civil war, Russia becomes involved as the ally of the assailed Reds; and, once Russia becomes involved, those nations considering themselves menaced by Russia and Communism — notably, Germany and Italy in Europe, and Japan in the Far East — also become involved.

As for foreign intervention in the Spanish struggle or in any other nation's crisis or civil war, it is futile to try to establish a moral balance. There is also no point to discussing the questions: Who intervened first? Or who intervened most? British Foreign Minister Eden has intimated in Parliament that he considered the Russians more guilty in this respect than Italy or Portugal. But differences in degree of guilt — if guilt it can be properly called — are of no practical interest. If one is not a Communist and, particularly, if one belongs to the groups marked by Communism for destruction (which include most of the Liberal apologists of Communism), the most useful view to take of foreign intervention in the Spanish civil war would seem to be that of holding Communism convicted

by the express terms of its own ideology and program of the will to promote civil war wherever it may serve the ends of World Revolution. The ends of world revolution cannot be attained other than through civil war and international war as all the Communist authorities so correctly teach. And if one allows Communism to convict itself as a system of ideas and a program of action, one must allow the Russian Government similarly to convict itself of the will to promote civil war.

We may be sure that if Communism triumphs in Spain, the Third International, Russia, and the Communists of the world will justly claim credit for the result. All that is needed for clear thinking about the Spanish war is the barest knowledge of the daily press reports and a clear understanding of the true nature of the Communist challenge. For such an understanding, nothing is better than almost any authorized Communist text and nothing is worse than almost any Liberal apology for Communism or any Liberal plea for tolerance of, or co-operation with, the Communists.

OREGON'S SECRET LOVE CULT

By STEWART H. HOLBROOK

WHEN Joshua Elijah Creffield of Oregon raised his voice in holy anger, the vast city of San Francisco shook horribly in the grip of an Act of God and then went down, writhing and smoking, in one of the greatest disasters within the memory of living man. Impious folk may not believe this, but there were many in Oregon who did, and before this amazing backwoods prophet and prodigious fornicator was done, he had filled the State insane asylum nigh to bursting and had added measurably to the work of undertakers of the time.

Oregon, of course, has like other West Coast States been exposed to the workings of Christian medicine men since the earliest times. By the very power of his eye, back in the 'Forties, the Rev. Jason Lee could make a sinner twitch and groan mightily, and the later and also Rev. Billy Sunday caused multitudes of the ungodly to grovel in repentant sawdust. But these worthies were engaged in the simple saving of souls, whereas Joshua

Elijah Creffield was engrossed in search for a second, and not necessarily a virgin, Mother of Christ. His destruction of San Francisco was a mere incident.

Edmund Franz Creffield made his first appearance in the role of Joshua sometime in 1903 and in the then country village of Corvallis in Western Oregon. Born in Germany thirty-five years before, he had come to the United States as a youth and had joined the Salvation Army. As a commander in that group he came to Corvallis in 1902. A year later a sudden revelation broke over him like a great light and he was Edmund Creffield no longer but Joshua Elijah, sole prophet and for a short time sole communicant of the Church of the Bride of Christ. He had no learning beyond that he absorbed from a weekly reading of the Salvation Army's *War Cry*. He was not of imposing physical stature, nor was he, strangely enough, what connoisseurs in demonology would term a bull-roarer. He confined his bellowing to direct commands and

to the bringing down of curses from on high. But he could and did grow a beard that was a lulu and he allowed his hair to tumble down over his shoulders.

It must have been, despite its several churches, that the town of Corvallis was lacking something in spiritual life, at least so far as the women were concerned, for presently the new Joshua had a notable flock of females at his heels. Yet he went about the business so quietly that I have always thought he had subscribed to one of those correspondence courses in hypnotism which were so popular with lonely hired men, ratty village youths, and others of the time. If you're old enough you will readily recall the appeal of the advertisements: "Make Women Bend to Your Will."

In any case, Joshua Creffield was soon holding secret meetings in the homes of members, with the blinds pulled down. Afternoon, when grubby menfolk were away at work, was the time. Girls in their 'teens skipped school. Housewives left their bread in dough, while unseen yet positive horns sprouted from the unsuspecting heads of solid male citizens.

Joshua became bolder, or at least careless, and the surprised parents of a fifteen-year-old girl learned

how she got that way. Pulling down all the blinds at the meeting place, this girl said, Joshua began to chant, swaying his arms and body in unison, and calling upon the Full Spirit to descend and to designate her who was to be the mother of a second Christ.

The girls and women swayed, twelve of them on this occasion. They chanted as they swayed, they spoke in tongues, and they cried aloud, while Joshua seemed to gain in stature and his normally pale eyes sank deep into his head where they glowed like two pits of fire. Then, like a thunderbolt, Joshua roared: "Vile clothes, begone!" The whiskered fellow disrobed, and, without urging on his part, all the women present did likewise. There was no coyness about it, no sense of shame. They threw off their peekaboo waists and their skirts, and they tore wildly at whalebone corsets, meanwhile moaning like all get-out. "Roll, ye sinners, roll!" thundered Joshua, and roll they did, some in chemises, some without, all over the bare floor, with Joshua rolling happily among them.

The subsequent orgies of this particular meeting could not here be reported and go through the mails. Never had there been such manifest workings of the Spirit,

and it was clear that Joshua was going about his quest for a mother of Christ in a thorough and a searching manner.

News of the Joshuan search got around in small Corvallis in a hurry, and more than one wife and daughter was put on the domestic grill. Four girls, ranging in age from fourteen to sixteen years, were sent away to the Oregon Boys and Girls Aid Society. One married woman was committed to the State asylum at Salem. A committee of two men called on the Prophet and requested him to leave town. He simply sneered at Joshua and laughed quietly in his beard.

For by now the Prophet felt himself strong enough to defy all the male scoffers in town. The meetings grew wilder and much larger, until it was common for a score of girls and women to attend. Joshua invented some rites new even to Corvallis matrons, and on at least two occasions he led a whole harem of them, like a Pied Piper suffering from acute satyriasis, to a spot in some river-bottom land south of town. Here the lot of them stripped and rolled their sins away in the lush grass. Some unbeliever whose name is lost to history but whose Brownie had a good lens, took a candid camera shot of one of these

gatherings in the wildwood. The film was small but clear as crystal, and it was all but worn out in the making of prints which circulated by the hundreds in Corvallis and nearby towns.

No movie ever made created such a furor as this two inches of Brownie film. There was an immediate uproar, as enraged fathers and injured husbands had their kids and wives packed off to the State asylum and the home for wayward girls. Fifteen of Joshua's tribe were at once taken out of circulation, while others got warnings to which they paid little if any heed. Joshua remained. He not only remained but he took to wife, in an orthodox manner, one Maude Hurt, the twenty-year-old daughter of an old and respected family; and the meetings continued, albeit with greater secrecy.

Then, on the coolish evening of January 4, 1904, a band of men made a call on the Prophet. They escorted him to the edge of town, gave him a coat of tar and feathers, and told him to begone. For a while he dropped out of sight, though not out of mind of those of his followers who had not yet been locked up. These took to pining openly for Joshua, nor did they pine in vain. The Prophet secretly returned and was soon taken in

flagrante delicto with the wife of a prominent citizen, but got away with no buckshot in his pants. The husband swore out a warrant charging adultery.

The police had been waiting for something tangible like this to work on. But they couldn't find the Prophet. To stimulate the hunt, Victor Hurt, father-in-law of Joshua, offered a reward of \$150 for his arrest. Maude Hurt Creffield secured a divorce. Things looked dark for the Prophet.

Nearly three months passed with Creffield at large. Then, on a day in June, young Roy Hurt, adopted son of Victor, made a startling discovery. Crawling under the Hurt home in search of a tin can in which to carry worms on a fishing trip, the youngster was frightened near out of his wits when he suddenly found himself looking into the great blazing eyes of a bearded man. Backing out of the hole as fast as he could, the boy called his foster-father. Victor Hurt came and peered into the dark hole and then called the police.

The cops came and hauled the Prophet from his den. He was, as one of the officers recalls thirty years after, a sight to behold. Naked as to clothes, and dirty as a Berkshire hog, the Prophet was as hairy all over as a black water

spaniel — and most gloriously endowed by Mother Nature withal. His beard grew down to his stomach and was bushy as a clump of alder. But he was as thin as a fence rail. He was weak, too, and could scarcely stand.

"You're Creffield, ain't you?" asked a doubtful cop, recalling the old stories of surviving cave men.

"I am Joshua." The voice that came from the beard was weak, yet obviously the voice of a prophet.

They pieced together a weird story. For nearly three months Creffield had lived, naked, in the hole under the house of the very man who had offered a reward for his arrest, emerging only when the menfolk were away, and being fed scraps of food that the women could smuggle from the cupboard.

Put on trial on the adultery charge previously mentioned, a jury of men found Joshua guilty and old Judge Sears threw the book at him.

"Two years in State's prison," said the judge.

"God bless you and forgive you, for ye know not what ye do," responded the Prophet.

II

With Creffield behind bars, menfolk slept more soundly than for a

year past. Gradually there was a trickle back from the asylum and detention homes of the girls and women who had wanted to become the Second Mother, and the town regained something of its former quiet. So forgotten was the whole affair that the press failed to mark the release of Creffield from the pen in December, 1905.

Shaved clean now, and his hair cut, Creffield at once dug out for Los Angeles—then as now a lodestone for prophets of all kinds—and immediately began a correspondence with some of his former devotees in Corvallis. He also sent a note of warning to Victor Hurt, his ex-father-in-law:

God has resurrected me. I have now got my feet on your neck. God has restored me to my own. I will return to Oregon and gather together all my followers. Place no obstruction in my way, or God will smite you.—Joshua Creffield.

To Esther Mitchell, fair and seventeen-year-old girl who had been one of the youngest of his flock before his incarceration, Creffield wrote at length. The Lord, he confided, had now definitely chosen her to become the Second Mother, and had commanded Creffield to bring it about. What young Esther replied is not known, but later events indicated that her answer had been favorable.

Creffield now went north, stopping neither in Corvallis nor in Oregon, but going direct to Seattle where, by pre-arrangement, his former wife awaited him. They were remarried by an orthodox preacher and went to live with Mrs. Creffield's brother and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hurt of Seattle.

Joshua presently let them into a secret. He had, he said, made up his mind to call down the wrath of God upon Seattle, Portland, Corvallis, and San Francisco. He had also sent this warning to his faithful followers in Corvallis. He would loose the Lord's anger just as soon as he could establish a colony for those who cared to be saved from the coming devastation. He told Frank Hurt that he, Joshua, knew of a wonderful spot for a true Garden of Eden; all he needed was a little financial help.

Creffield painted a gaudy picture. He, with Frank Hurt as his Gabriel, would buy a piece of land known to Creffield at a remote spot on the Oregon coast. Here, amidst the green and lush vegetation, the Prophet would lead all his followers (female), and the whole outfit of them, with Frank Hurt as lieutenant, would live free from the profane gaze of scoffers—while the great cities on the coast, and

Corvallis, too, groveled in penitent ashes.

It was a pretty swell picture. Frank Hurt sold his Seattle property and went, as directed, to Waldport, ninety miles west of Corvallis on the wild Pacific shore. Mrs. Creffield went ahead with the Hurts. Joshua was to follow alone.

On the afternoon of April 18, 1906, the Prophet again laid foot on Oregon soil. He skirted Corvallis in a buggy, and then took the train for Newport, end of the line and nearest railroad station to Waldport and Eden. When passengers got off at Newport, they found the town in great excitement. Telegraphic dispatches told that the city of San Francisco lay in smoking ruins.

"I knew it," the bearded man said quietly to the little group who now fairly trembled at sight of the Man of Wrath. "Didn't I tell you I would call down God's curse? This is only the beginning. I have warned the faithful at Corvallis. They are coming."

And come they did. Within twenty-four hours, trainmen on the C. & E. were struck by the beauty of a fair-haired girl who said she was going to join the Prophet at Waldport. It was Esther Mitchell, soon to be in headlines throughout the West. There were two trains

daily out of Corvallis, and for the next week every train carried at least two pilgrims on their way to Eden, and sometimes as many as six.

Back in troubled Corvallis, females were in ferment, while fathers and husbands were desperate. Girls started for school and never got there. Housewives disappeared, two of them carrying babies. When the man who had once had Creffield arrested for adultery awoke one morning, he found a note in his wife's handwriting pinned to the pillow beside his own. It read:

I don't want to leave in the daytime because the children will cry and want to go with me. I must leave while they are asleep. I have taken \$3.50 of your money. This will not pay all my fare and I will have to walk ninety miles to where I want to go.

That's how they came when Joshua called. That woman walked much of the way to Waldport — ninety miles up through a mountain pass where cougars stalked the very roadside, and then down to the beach and the Prophet. Praise Joshua and great day in the morning!

Exodus was on. Fathers of two runaway girls took guns and got aboard a train for the beach. But Joshua, undoubtedly warned by the Lord, had flown. Young

George Mitchell, brother to Esther, heard that the Prophet had fled to Seattle. Mitchell went at once to Seattle, and there on the morning of May 7, 1906, he sighted Joshua and Mrs. Creffield at the corner of Second and Columbia streets. Stepping up behind him, Mitchell pressed the muzzle of a .38 revolver to the Prophet's neck and pulled the trigger. Creffield fell in a welter of blood.

Despite the protests of the widow and the Hurts, all of whom said he was as ageless as Time and immune to the ills and accidents of mortal man, a cynical undertaker stuffed cotton into the hole in Creffield's neck and they laid him away tenderly in Lake View Cemetery in Seattle.

III

George Mitchell's trial for murder would have got front-page space all over the country had it not been that the Thaw case was concurrently on view in New York. The revelations concerning the lusty doings of the Prophet, as brought out by defense counsel, were juicier than anything offered at the Thaw trial, in comparison a Dorcus Society meeting; and Mitchell was found not guilty.

Free again, with the man who

had seduced his sister in the grave, Mitchell went to Seattle's Union Station to get a train back to Oregon. There, while hundreds of tourists watched, Esther Mitchell walked up behind her brother, pulled a gleaming nickle-plated gun from her cloak, and shot him through the head.

"My brother killed an innocent man," Esther told a court, "and that is why I shot him." She wouldn't plead insanity, so a jury had her committed to the State hospital. The Prophet's widow took poison while awaiting trial; she had bought the gun Esther used.

A month after the Prophet's death, old George Hodges, Oregon timber cruiser, emerged from the woods after running a "Forty" south of Waldport. Hodges couldn't know that he was in Garden of Eden country, so it is not strange that he swallowed the chew of *Climax* he was working on; he had run fair into a camp of what looked to him to be wild women. Ragged, almost naked, and little better than half-starved, he found five females and a baby grouped about a tattered old tent on the beach. They told him they were waiting for Joshua, the man who had just destroyed San Francisco and was now on his way to do likewise for

Corvallis, Portland, and Seattle. Hodges told them that their Prophet was dead. They merely laughed wildly and those who could still stumble around went off in search of more mussels, their only food in weeks.

The startled timber cruiser notified authorities who came and removed the crazed women back to Corvallis which, as they were sur-

prised to find, was still standing. For a time there was talk that Joshua had been resurrected, but, if so, he never showed up in his old haunts. And to this day the city of Corvallis (Pop. 7585) remains on guard. In October of 1936, even so seemingly and mild-mannered a prophet as Dr. Norman Thomas was refused permission to address the burghers there.



THE SPIDERS

BY ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

THE spiders are good housekeepers
 With little agile noiseless hands
 They work with dust to make all soft,
 Their music is Time's flowing sands.

They love things gray, and light that's veiled,
 They love a room where naught is stirred,
 Where no wind comes, no footstep falls,
 And where no voice is ever heard.

All change they like to make themselves
 Dimly industrious and precise,
 Their world secure in flaking walls
 Upon whose stairways run the mice.

ADVENTURES OF A BOOKMAN

BY ALAN DEVOE

I WAS sitting rather bleakly in my cubbyhole of a shop, staring at the shelves and counting my cigarettes and wondering whether all the book buyers in the world were dead. Having culled out all the Moved-Left-No-Addressduds from my mailing lists, I fell to speculating as to whether Levinson might be persuaded to print another catalogue on credit. Too bad that Levinson wasn't a book collector; I might have managed some kind of swap. All bookmen love swaps. I know one who won't have a lawyer or a dentist or a doctor who isn't a collector—he once even got a wen excised from the back of his cranium in exchange for a first edition of Robert Browning. That, however, is not what I started out to tell.

While I was sitting there, morosely enough, the door opened and a pleasant-faced young man came in. I don't know how to describe him, unless by that old phrase "shabby genteel". He was wearing good clothes, and had what must once have been an expensive top-

coat over his arm, but his cuffs had a scissor-clipped look and his shirt wasn't very clean and his shoes needed shining. Booksellers fall into a habit of "typing" their callers, and I had typed this young man almost before the door closed behind him. Down on his luck; out of a job; undoubtedly a seller—not a buyer.

He came straight over to my desk, holding out three books in his left hand. I knew that rather desperate I've-swallowed-my-pride look, and I hated to shake my head. I would have, though, if the young man hadn't spoken first:

"Will you give me a dollar for these?"

He spoke the words all in a rush, and thrust the three books at me.

I laid the volumes on my desk and looked at them. They were an inscribed first edition of Walter de la Mare's *Poems*, and a signed limited edition of Edna Millay's *Fatal Interview*, and a really beautiful first issue of Oscar Wilde's Newdigate Poem, *Ravenna*. I looked up at the young man.

"Yes," I said, "I'd be very glad to give you a dollar for these. But that would be an outrageous price. They're worth about \$50 to anyone who really wants them. I, however, am not just now in a position to pay anything like a fair price. A dollar would be just about all I *could* pay."

"A dollar is all right," said the young man, smiling. "That way, we'll each be doing the other a good turn."

I fished a dollar out of my vest and passed it over to him, and he said "Thanks", warmly and impulsively, and turned to leave.

But I couldn't let him go quite like that, so I called after him and asked him pointblank the reason for this urgency to get a dollar. He stood with his hand on the door-knob, looking rather confused and sheepish, and told me. I had been right. Down on his luck. No job. Trying to keep up a front in his letters to his folks, who lived in Oklahoma. "And tomorrow, you know, is Mother's Day. I need a dollar to send Mom a telegram. So I thought I'd see if I couldn't sell a couple of my books." He added wistfully: "I used to be quite a collector."

You get used to almost everything in the bookselling business, including the clergymen who col-

lect books on flagellation and the taxi-drivers who read Proust. So it didn't completely astonish me. Nor was I completely astonished a couple of days later when I was having lunch with George Ransome (who ran the Windsor Bookshop uptown) to learn from George that quite recently a young man carrying a topcoat had prowled around in his shop for an hour or so and had artfully contrived to steal an inscribed first edition of de la Mare's *Poems*, a signed *Fatal Interview*, and a really beautiful copy of *Ravenna*.

II

Most booksellers try to discourage book-scouts from calling too often and staying too long; but I never did. I would rather sit with a group of scouts than attend the most celebrity-clogged literary tea ever given. In case you may not know just what a book-scout is, it may be explained that he is a species of peripatetic bookman who, having no office or shop, relies for his living solely upon a skullduggery of book-lore and a willingness to spend hours in street-tramping. He makes his living (when he does) by spotting a first edition of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* in Abe Ginsberg's second-hand shop on Astor Place,

acquiring it for a dime, trudging forty-odd blocks uptown to Scribner's or Brentano's and selling it for \$15. Not that the margin of profit is usually anything like as large as that. A book-scout's mind is a teeming Encyclopedia Librorum; he makes it his business to know insofar as possible every single thing that is happening in the book world. He knows who is buying what, and who is selling what, and for how much. He can rattle off last month's or last week's or this morning's auction prices as some brokers can rattle off stock quotations, and he knows the points whereby to distinguish genuine first editions of every collected writer from Voltaire to Cardinal Newman. Sometimes, in a very good year, he may make as much as \$1000.

They used to come to my shop at first—the scouts—only when they had something to offer for sale. But after a while, when they found that I too had a fondness for book-talk and that I didn't seem to mind (as some of the big fellows did) their grimy and tattered presence in my emporium, they would come in often, to rest their feet and talk. Sometimes there would be as many as five or six of them at a time, each hugging a frayed satchel or a brown paper parcel that con-

tained his day's stock, each filling the air with tobacco smoke and the aroma of bookishness.

Epstein, I should say, was the frowziest, and Reggie Mattison easily the most imposing. I knew Epstein for three years (he dropped dead, finally, while lugging a set of Montaigne through the July heat of Fourteenth Street), and I used to wonder if what little I knew about him was really the whole of his life. I incline to think that it was. He had no family, apparently, and he lived in a tiny basement room on the lower East Side. I called there once to inspect a set of George Eliot which he had acquired God knows where, and which was too massive for him to cart to my shop for my inspection. It was a stinking little hole of a room, filled half-way to the ceiling with book catalogues. Every morning Epstein would set forth from there in his seam-burst and age-greened suit, get a cup of coffee for a nickel, and then head for the bookstalls on Fourth Avenue. Sometimes he would be there for an hour, sometimes for half a day, haggling furiously in his raucous voice, waving his arms and shaking his head, until finally he got a volume or two at a price that suited him. Then he would come trudging uptown.

"A dollar only I'm asking!" he would say to me. "Think of it! A dollar! For *ten* dollars you couldn't buy this wollume — only from Epstein."

And then, with the coming of night, he would go back to that tiny box of a room, richer sometimes by a dollar, sometimes by half as much, and he would clamber into bed (in his union-suit, no doubt) and read book catalogues. As far as I can make out, that was the whole of his life. I know from his own lips that he never saw a movie, and I don't think he had any friends, or wanted them. Except, of course, books.

Really, when you come right down to it, only a genuine *passion* for books . . . an insatiable bibliomania . . . could lure a man to book-scouting and keep him at it. I have known many librarians, many great collectors, and none of them has ever had quite the same kind of deep-rooted and all-satisfying book-love that you find among the scouts.

Some of those who came to my shop were honest; some were not. One or two were picturesquely elegant, notably Reggie Mattison. I think Reggie is still alive, and so I don't use his right name. He was said to be seventy-six when I knew him. He had a drooping white

moustache and a Suth'n Cunnel white goatee, and in Summertime he clung doggedly to the custom of apparelling himself in what had once been a white suit. In all the time I knew him, I never saw him depressed, abashed, or sober.

He would breeze into the shop in an overpowering cloud of gin fumes, lay his cane carefully on my desk, unwrap a brown paper packet, and hand me a book. While I looked at it with pretended carefulness (Reggie's books were seldom any good), he would mop his forehead with a purple silk handkerchief and deliver sonorous Johnsonian remarks about the weather, or quote portentously and very inaccurately a few lines from Shakespeare.

"How much do you want for this, Mr. Mattison?" I would presently ask him.

He would look gravely at the volume, as though weighing the matter well and pondering whether to say one or two thousand.

"I have decided," he would tell me, "I have decided to set upon that volume a cash price of thirty-five cents."

He always accepted the quarter and the dime — or whatever it might be — with a most elaborate casualness. And then, in a few min-

utes, he would find some reason for departing, and I would see his tall and stately figure, wavering slightly, pass down the avenue in the direction of the nearest speak-easy.

Once, I remember, he brought to me a most ponderous set of religious works, which might have been worth a fairish price had the set been complete. But on the title-page of Volume One was the legend "Complete in VI Volumes", and Reggie had brought me only five. As the books were not wrapped, and as the old gentleman was more than usually teetery that morning, I dare say he had dropped the sixth volume somewhere.

I pointed out that the set was incomplete, and, when Reggie took this information incredulously, showed him the legend on the title-page of Volume One.

For a little while he seemed almost depressed, but presently he brightened and asked to borrow my penknife. Being busy with other matters, I paid no particular attention to what he was doing, but presently, when he cried "Behold!" in stentorian tones, I went over to him and beheld. With really brilliant skill he had scraped away the numeral "I" from the title-page of Volume One, so that it now read "Complete in V Volumes". Return-

ing my knife with a bow, he gathered up his books and sailed from my premises.

He came lurching back in an hour or two, with a wad of currency in his hand, and, I dare say, a quart or so of gin in his interior. He had had no trouble at all, it seems, in disposing of the set to a nearby theological seminary.

III

You never knew when one of them was coming — one of those chatty, pleasant-faced men who had dedicated themselves to the job of putting you in jail. John S. Sumner, himself, of course, was pretty well known by sight to most of us, and so was Bamberger, his assistant. But the others . . . there was a legion of them.

The courts can be very hard on what they call "vendors of obscene literature", but most judges have probably seldom been exposed to such temptation as beckons a near-bankrupt bookseller who sees his chance to make fifty or sixty dollars a week by trafficking in *Fanny Hill*, *The Amatory Experiences of a Surgeon*, and the like. There are plenty of customers. They expect the booksellers with whom they deal to accord the whole matter the sacred secrecy of

the confessional. And booksellers mostly do. If they didn't, some of the trials for "vending obscene literature" could certainly produce tasty headlines. At one time, for instance, when the Society for the Suppression of Vice was causing wholesale arrests in New York City, the then Mayor was regularly buying the "obscene literature" himself. Not a single bookseller (and some of those arrested got as much as three months) breathed a word of it.

A prosperous, sober-looking gentleman of middle age would come into my shop, shake my hand in friendly fashion, and then — peering cautiously around to make sure we were alone — would ask in a genial whisper whether I had a copy of *The Rajah's Adventures* for sale. I could do one of two things. I could assume an expression of injured piety and tell him frostily to go elsewhere (in which case I might be insulting a potential good customer), or I could say, "No, but I might be able to get it for you" (in which case I was coming perilously within the shadow of Welfare Island, if the man turned out to be a snoopathic clergyman or some other kind of burning anti-vice agitator). Personally, I preferred the first course, but without the frosty piety.

I would simply say, "It's considered illegal to sell that book, so I don't handle it. But there are plenty of other booksellers who would accommodate you." (Which was certainly no lie. I used to know a go-getting Italian who made, and probably still makes, several thousand a year by shilly-shallying back and forth between New York and Washington, D. C., with a large Gladstone bag, purveying erotica to the book-minded members of the national legislature.)

The traffic in "obscene literature" is sometimes uproariously silly. When *The Well of Loneliness* first came out, I remember that old Fritz Erhardt — as affable a bookman as ever lived — made what was, for him, quite a small fortune by booklegging copies of it, concealed in cigar boxes, at \$15 per copy. I am sure his shade would derive much merriment from the fact that the populace can now buy all the copies of that book they want for ninety-eight cents each in any drugstore.

All kinds of lonely and disconsolate and perplexed and crotcheteridden people are drawn to second-hand bookstores as to a magnet. People who are misfitted in the human world, and who have retired from it to live in a world of the printed word; people who are

perplexed, and who are forever seeking light in some magic and never-to-be-found volume; people who are desperately lonely, and eager even for vicarious friends. It is a long procession . . . stealers of books, lovers of books, even haters of books. (I once knew a wealthy man who bought Robert Ingersoll's books only that he might destroy them.)

Some of these people a bookseller does not ever forget. Once a cab-driver bought from me a page of original Swinburne manuscript,

and when he took the sheet of blue foolscap in his hands, his fingers shook so that he could hardly hold it, and for long minutes he could not speak a word. Once a very old man whose name I do not dare reveal came to me with half a dozen volumes by a writer popular in the 'Eighties. I said that I was sorry, but that the books were worthless, and that there had been no call for that writer's books for years. He looked at me with watery old eyes and said:

"Yes, I know. I am that writer."



CLEAR DAY

BY ELIZABETH RANDALL

THE leaves keep falling, breaking down the wall
Of Summer woods and letting distance in;
From tree-trunks deeply visible, the call
Of Winter birds comes back, and shade grows thin.
This light, unclouded by protecting green,
Too cold to keep the want of truth away,
Arouses now what never could have been
While Summer kept us screened in holiday.
But with the fallow fields' long view made plain,
And clouds that lazed along the hills disbanding,
And distance blowing through the wind-clean brain,
Is thought exalted into understanding;
Till birds confuse the mind with sudden flight,
All black and all unknown against the light.

ROPE

A Story

BY CHARLES MACARTHUR

THE night clerk at the Y. M. C. A. Hotel said that it was a fine morning, and Mr. Stovich made ringing response.

"You said a mouthful! It sure is one swell day."

"For me"—he added significantly.

Mr. Stovich drolly winked his eye as he made this comment. It was the night clerk's cue, but he muffed it completely. Instead of rising to the occasion, he merely glanced at the clock, observed that it was six o'clock, and said:

"Ain't you up kinda early this morning?"

Stovich could hardly believe his ears. It was too astounding and incredible. He scanned the other's face in the expectation that his words would prove to be a jest. But no. Obviously, the man did not know who Mr. Stovich was, or what he was doing abroad at this early hour. Perceiving this, Stovich smiled coldly, and with considerable dignity remarked:

"I see you don't read the newspapers."

"Why—what do you mean?" replied the night clerk, with maddening lack of comprehension.

"You ought to know about that little necktie party we're giving them Hunkies this morning."

Mr. Stovich accompanied this reproach with an indignant stare.

"That's right!" cried the clerk, instantly and profoundly impressed. "You're Mr. Stovich, ain't you?"

Stovich exhibited all his gold teeth in a gratified smile. He nodded.

"The day clerk was tellin' me," continued the other. "Excuse me, brother, for not knowing you!"

"No offense," said Stovich graciously.

He smiled again and passed into the quick lunch that adjoined the hotel lobby, happily conscious that he was followed by a popeyed stare. Presently he was followed by the night clerk himself, who stood at

a respectful distance while Stovich added a bottle of ketchup to a plate brimming with beans.

"It ain't hurt your appetite none!"

For reply, Stovich impaled a large chunk of bacon with his fork. It disappeared with a gurgling, sand-sucker effect.

"I bet them guys over in the jail ain't very hungry, heh?"

Mr. Stovich winked that such was undoubtedly the case. Encouraged, the night clerk sat down.

"Tell me something," he said. "Are you goin' to see 'em get it?"

This was too much. Stovich stopped eating to stare.

"I mean, are you goin' t' be right in the same room with 'em — any-ways near the scaffold?"

By shifting a quantity of bread and beans to the right cheek, Stovich managed to release a guffaw. His eyes glistened at the preposterous ignorance of the man.

"Am I?" he demanded — "Am I!"

His Adam's apple worked violently on a four-inch plunge. Soon it was possible for him to talk.

"I'm the guy," he explained modestly, "that does the dirty work."

A segment of his cinnamon bun went into his coffee with this, but he did not take his eyes from the night clerk's face or risk missing

out on a second of the ensuing surprise.

"Say! — no kidding — you don't mean — you spring the trap?"

"That's all!" replied Stovich. His smile spread in spite of his modest disinclination to exult.

"God! I wouldn't want your job!" The night clerk meant it.

"Why not?"

"No, thanks! Nix on that stuff for mine!"

"Oh, is that so?" Stovich interposed, with some heat. "If everybody felt like you do, where the hell would we be at? Huh? Your life wouldn't be worth a nickel! Maybe you don't give a damn, but did you ever stop to think of what would happen to your mother, and your sister, if there wasn't any capital punishment? Supposin' some dinge came along and — how would you feel about that?"

The night clerk supposed that was one way of looking at it.

"You're damn right!" declared Stovich. "Besides, I guess you'd change your mind pretty quick if somebody handed you a hundred bucks every time you pushed a little button —"

"A hundred bucks!"

"Three hundred bucks this morning," Stovich corrected amiably. "We're goin' t' knock off three of 'em — in a row!"

He beamed at the other's undisguised envy.

"Yes, sir! Three pushes at a hundred a push! I guess that's kinda rotten, huh?"

"Pretty soft," said the night clerk, dismally. "I work three months for that."

"And I work three minutes." Stovich could not forbear from rubbing it in.

The night clerk proceeded to other questions. How many men had Stovich seen die? Was it true that they always loaded them up with morphine? How did they act when the rope was put around their necks? Was it a fact that doomed men stood constantly in need of a plumber?

Stovich resented this examination as a cow might resent the milking activities of an inexperienced farmhand. They had nothing to do with his three-hundred-dollar fee, and by degrees his manner became professional, reticent, and strained.

Rising abruptly, he selected a sagging slab of strawberry shortcake from the counter. He was mindful of the extravagance of his purchase, but he salved his economical soul with the reflection that it was not every day that somebody handed him three hundred dollars. This was no time for self-denial.

One shortcake led to another, and it was twenty minutes past six before Stovich had finished his repast. He helped himself liberally to toothpicks, paid his check, and strolled magnificently through the lobby to the street, with the night clerk twittering at his heels.

II

This show of respect was pleasing, Stovich was forced to admit. Certainly he didn't get any too much consideration at the jail. There he lived, breathed, and had his being simply and solely as "Sap", an unfortunate sobriquet he had acquired in the first week of his career. It had become so common an appellation that his real name had long ago been forgotten by his associates. "Sap" had a rather friendly significance now, but somehow Stovich could never forgive its definition. It hurt like a sore toe, and as he moved down the street toward the jail, he meditated for the ten-thousandth time on all the reasons that may have inclined his persecutors to fix so durable and so offensive a name upon him. He finally concluded, as he had every time he had considered the matter in the past, that the unpleasant expression and the motives for its application origi-

nated with one Ernest Fink, long an assistant warden at the jail.

Ernest, he reflected, had substantial reasons for wishing to belittle him. Briefly, Stovich had cut him out in the affections of Gracie Blaha—cut him out thoroughly and forever, and in less than a year's time. He chuckled at the recollection of how he had courted Grace right under Ernest's nose; and he snorted out loud at Ernest's probable feelings when it became known that on this very day the lovely Gracie would be united in bonds of holy matrimony to the enterprising Mr. Stovich. "Sap" Stovich, if you like. He should worry!

Grace didn't think he was a sap. Grace thought he was a swell fellow, with a smart head on him. Well, why shouldn't she? Hadn't he made good?

"You're damn right I have!" he said aloud in answer to this speculation.

Not that Gracie hadn't been responsible for his success. He realized that if it hadn't been for her, he would be a bum, just like Ernest Fink and all the rest of those smart-alecks at the jail. But she had got after him in time. She made him move into the Y. M. C. A. Hotel and save his money; and when he didn't save

it fast enough she saved it for him. Every week he handed her his pay, earned in guarding prisoners between executions. He reserved just fifteen dollars for his personal expenses. After every hanging, he handed her the hundred-dollar fee untouched; and Gracie banked it all.

Leave it to her! In less than a year she had saved seventeen hundred bucks, and it was right there in the old bank in her name! None of those guys at the jail could touch him for any of it. He could tell them he didn't have it, and it would be the truth. Gracie had put him wise to that.

"You're a bad little Stovie, and you spend your money foolish," she used to tell him. "You let me save it, and we'll have a nice little nest-egg when we get married."

Gracie had promised to marry him the moment the bank account reached the two-thousand-dollar mark. Now the glad day was at hand. With the three hundred dollars that would be handed to him this morning, their savings would amount to two thousand dollars even, not counting interest.

He wondered how they would spend it. He supposed Gracie ought to have a silk nightie or two, if they didn't spend a dime on anything else. He knew where to go

to get the very one. It was lavender with a lot of lace frills on it. Every day he had created a thousand intoxicating pictures of how she would look with it on; and now, when he considered how soon that picture would be materialized, he could scarcely repress his exhilaration.

"Oh, boy!" he exclaimed, and quickened his pace.

III

Stovich's heart sang within him as he drew near the jail, walking on the heel and ball of each foot. For the first time in four years he smiled at the policeman guarding the jail door and wished the turnkey a jovial good morning. Joy mounted to the pitch of ecstasy, so that when he saw the hated Ernest, author and finisher of all his tribulations, he could hardly refrain from surprising him with the glad good news. Only the realization that the announcement would bring a pain to his rival more keen than his own unspeakable joy caused him to hold his peace, even when Ernest provoked him with an unusually surly greeting.

"Well, Sap! Yah finally got here, did ya?"

"Why, what's eatin' you?" inquired Stovich, nettled more by his

tone than his use of the hated name.

"You'll find out when the boss sees yah," replied Ernest. "Don't yah know, we're making it an hour ahead of time today?"

Stovich soon discovered this circumstance to be true. The editor of the morning *Herald* had estimated that he could put on 10,000 extra city circulation if the three men could be conveniently hanged before the last deadline of his paper. He had communicated this fact to the sheriff, who was more or less obligated to the *Herald* for his job. Consequently, the time of the executions had been advanced one hour to meet the emergency. It is true the victims uttered some complaint at this arrangement, but they were told that daylight-saving time had been declared during the night.

A dozen reporters were already on the scene. They were impatient. Stovich had no time to lose. Hurriedly, he visited the death chamber and tested the ropes with large bags of sand, equal to the weight of each intended victim. Ernest grudgingly helped him in deference to the growing lack of time, and presently the paraphernalia was ready. The ropes were new and yellow and strong. The trap worked like a charm. Stovich re-

moved the sand bags and reported to the sheriff that two of the doomed men could come and get their medicine.

The bartenders, aldermen, baseball writers, professional athletes, doctors, and reporters who had been ordained to witness the spectacle now presented their tickets and flocked into the death chamber, making a dive for the good seats. Good-natured confusion ensued. Much loud prophecy on the part of the veterans to the effect that the stomachs of the newcomers would not be equal to the exhibition. Much stout denial on the part of the newcomers. More banter of the same sort floated about the long, bare, whitewashed room from the rows of benches that marched back from the stage-like scaffold to the furthestmost brick wall. The hubbub was added to by a professional bondsman, slightly stewed, who knocked a turnkey unconscious for suggesting that he remove his hat and cigar. Stovich was well pleased at this diversion. The turnkey was one of his most inveterate persecutors, and he only wished he had done the hitting.

The tumult increased when a prominent prizefighter appeared at the iron gate as escort to a couple of women with whom he had been

drinking the night through in anticipation of the morning's entertainment. The turnkeys by this time were thoroughly incensed at the treatment they were getting and massed to throw the tipsy trio out of doors. Loud recriminations issued from all the combatants and partisan cheers arose from the crowd. The turmoil was such that the sheriff, who had been reading the death warrants to the doomed, came flying downstairs to investigate. A heated discussion followed. The pugilist's lady friends were thrown out and he was admitted to the death chamber on his promise of good behavior, following the warm personal endorsement of Alderman Twombly and assurances from the crowd that he was a hell of a swell fellow when he was sober.

Matters were now in readiness.

The sheriff finished reading the death warrants and presently appeared on the scaffold with the warden. He teetered for a time on his toes, nodded to a dozen or so of his friends, and addressed a few by their first names. Evidently he had been playing poker with them the night before, as not a few took occasion to rail pleasantly of marked cards and the advisability of hanging the sheriff instead of the intended victims. The sheriff

silenced this criticism with a majestic wave of his hand as the shuffle of feet and the sound of voices drifted down the upper corridor into the death chamber.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life. . . ."

The strong intonation of the prison chaplain was repeated in faltering echoes by the doomed.

"He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. . . ." Sing-song echoes, drawing nearer.

By the use of vigorous pantomime, the sheriff exhorted the audience to refrain from conversation and to extinguish cigars and cigarettes. It was futile. Desperately, he jerked his thumb in the direction of the rising voices of the dead-marchers. The spectators advised him to go back and sit down. His gestures became pleading. He cajoled them with winks and scowls and frowns. They told him to go and soak his head.

"And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die. . . ."

The mortuary procession appeared upon the scaffold. First the chaplain in a shiny Prince Albert coat, affecting to read from a little book the passage he had cause to know backward and by heart. Then two of the murderers, manacled and supported by four

guards. They shuffled mechanically forward, repeating the minister's words with blue lips and dry and swollen tongues.

Still mumbling the ritual, each was led to the trap. Stovich and Ernest deftly substituted leather straps for their manacles and enveloped them with shrouds.

"The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. . . ."

With the rhythmic unison of a trained acrobatic team, Stovich and his partner fetched the ropes from the cross-trees of the scaffold. Quickly they drew each noose about its destined neck. One of the men made a frightful grimace, sticking his tongue out as far as it would go, rolling his eyes inward. The other's knees sagged horribly, but both recovered themselves and continued to recite the ritual as gallantly as possible. One even smiled a little, causing the dean of the hanging reporters to scribble a memo that "he died as cowards of his stripe always die — with a cheap effort at bravado". That was good stuff and had the advantage of being moral as well. The reporter had used it for each of the thirty-two hangings he had attended.

"He leadeth me beside the still waters. . . ."

Stovich adjusted the muslin masks and stepped back, as the

holy clerk galloped into the Psalm of David. The electric button was fixed to the scaffold rail. It had been agreed that when the recitation reached: "*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life . . .*" he would press it and release the trap.

The crowd caught its breath as the stiff stance of the sheriff and his aides indicated the end was at hand. Stovich nervously fondled the button to see if it was still in place. The condemned creatures shuffled their feet nervously, expectantly, as one who is about to take a five-thousand-foot dive. . . .

Cries rang down the steel corridor outside the chamber of death.

"*Sheriff! Oh, sheriff!*"

Guards burst into the room.

"*Governor's on the 'phone — says to call it off!*"

The reporters swarmed behind the sheriff as he gave a curt command and raced down the corridor to his office.

The chaplain closed his book, keeping the place with his finger. He murmured something to the two men, who stood motionless and trembling on the scaffold.

Instantly the sheriff returned. He verified the news.

"Well, I'll be damned!" Stovich exploded. He was thoroughly disgusted.

A thought possessed him.

"Say, Boss, how do you know it's the Governor? How do you know it ain't a joke, or maybe some of these birds' friends? Looks to me like somebody's tryin' to make a sucker out o' you!"

"It was him, all right," said the sheriff. "He says they're innocent."

"Yah — I suppose!" spat Stovich bitterly.

"Hell!" he added. "Somebody's a fine fathead — that's all I got to say!"

"Don't take it so hard, Sap," consoled the sheriff. "He didn't say nothing about the other guy."

For the first time in his long, useful, and industrious career, Stovich was thoroughly sour on his job. On other occasions he had been stimulated by the thought that in pressing the button that worked the trap he was supervening in the prosaic affairs of men with the might of an angry God, ending the sinful schemes that originated in the gray gelatin of his victims' skulls — ending their loves, their hopes, their dreams — exterminating millions yet unborn. Really profound thoughts were inspired in his brain by the gentle pressure of his thumb. Often he toyed with the apparatus to demonstrate how imperceptible a push would send the two-ton mechanism of the gal-

lows crashing and tear the souls from their habitation.

But today he was surly and sore. When the third victim complained that the rope was adjusted too tightly, Stovich told him he was in a fair way of getting a sock on his smeller, and he did not wait for the prearranged signal to spring the trap. He had taken enough chances for one day!

IV

At the customary buffet luncheon tendered by the warden to the spectators following the execution, Stovich could not eat for the first time in years, so complete was the collapse of his castles in the air. The sight of heaps of pork and cheese sandwiches, bowls of dill pickles, and cases of bottled beer made him sick to his stomach, especially as the famous appetite of Ernest Fink was never better. Moreover, Ernest had divined the cause of his disappointment and was communicating his findings to everybody in the room.

"Look at the Sap!" he bawled boisterously. "He's green around the gills! Two hundred iron men snatched right out of his mitt!"

Everybody joined in the loud laughter that followed this witticism. Stovich felt the blood rush to

his head. He sensed that Ernest had somehow guessed the terms of his pact with Gracie. He felt that he was gloating over the delay in his plans. Unreasonably, he blamed Ernest for the reprieves and he longed to give him a black eye, right there in front of everybody.

Matters were not helped by Ernest's attitude. He advanced toward Stovich with a pork sandwich in one hand and a cheese sandwich in the other. His mouth was filled with both, but not sufficiently filled to prevent him from making hardly articulate jests on the financial blow Stovich had suffered.

"What were you goin' t' do with the dough — if you'd a got it?" he inquired suggestively, a leer lighting his face.

This was the last lash and too much to endure. Stovich thought of a devastating reply.

"Marry your girl, if you really want to know," he retorted. "Now laugh!"

Ernest's reaction to this news was surprising. He swallowed heavily and held out his hand.

"Old boy," he declared gruffly, "I know it. I heard about it this morning, and I want to congratulate you. Put her there!"

Stovich accepted his hand in odd astonishment.

"Who told you?" he asked.

"Gracie," replied Ernest.

He laid down one of his sandwiches and turned away, applying a pocket handkerchief to his eye.

Stovich was touched. He could well imagine the scene that had taken place—the lover's wonted ardor and Gracie's cruel disdain. He gripped his rival's hand.

"Thanks, Ernie," he said. "I hope there ain't any hard feelings."

"Hell — no!" replied the other. "It's just the way it goes."

Ernest smiled.

Stovich thought it was the gamest smile he had ever seen, and he pitied the aching heart it so lightly disguised. He began to think more of Ernest.

Congratulations ensued. Ernest offered Stovich a cigar.

"Thanks," said Stovich, sliding it into his upper vest pocket. "I'll smoke it later on."

He was pressed to have a bottle of beer, but he recalled an important engagement.

"It's with Gracie, Ernest," he vouchsafed awkwardly, "as long as you know about it anyways."

"Oh, well, then, we won't keep you," Ernest generously interrupted. "Give her my best regards when you see her!"

Stovich said he would and de-

parted, pausing at the sheriff's office for his one-hundred-dollar fee. A loud peal of laughter arose from the sheriff's quarters as he took his leave of the jail. Stovich guessed that the boys were kidding Ernest. He felt avenged and forgiving.

V

The trysting place was an amusement park near the city limits, in deference to certain sentimental associations that Stovich nurtured in his breast. The first beautiful hours of his romance had passed amid the lights and thrills and pleasant music of the place. The precipitous perils of the roller-coaster had made it possible for him to encircle Gracie's slender waist for the first intoxicating time; and it was among the tenebrous windings of the Old Mill that he had poured out his love and replaced Ernest as Gracie's cavalier.

Multicolored memories of joy made riot in his heart as he reached the outer gate. Magic casements opened out on fiery pleasures to be. The shuffling of feet, the cries of the barkers, the merry click of the turnstiles, made sweet medley with his thoughts. In fancy, he led Gracie to the Old Mill and once again declared his passion as their

craft bumped tranquilly along the dark mazes, past canvas Neptunes and plaster mermaids, out into the joyous sunshine. In fancy, she threw her arms about his neck and kissed him, signifying assent. Forthwith his mind envisaged a thousand and one rainbow nights with his beloved, rapturously explored the enpurpled borderlands of dreams, paused long in each vale and bower.

He was jarred rudely into consciousness by a tug at his sleeve and a hoarse suggestion:

"Guess your weight, mister?"

Stovich's first impulse was to kill the impious hoodlum who had arrested such a glowing train of thought, until it occurred to him that it might not be a bad idea to yield to the fellow's suggestion. First, he had not weighed himself in a long time. Second, there was a good chance that the man might guess wrong, in which event he had promised that the experiment would cost nothing. Finally, it was a cheap and interesting way to spend the time against Gracie's arrival. Moved by these reasons, he followed the shillaber to a tripod from which swung a chair.

The weight-guesser patted him professionally about the body. Stovich smiled confidently. He did not see the fellow pause at his hip

pocket and draw a cross with a piece of chalk, any more than he felt that same pocket explored and emptied of his wallet as he took his seat in the chair. It was very expertly done.

"Well, well, well — what's this?" cried the weight-guesser as he gazed into his dial a second later. "Two hundred and forty pounds! I certainly got fooled that time!"

"You certainly did," laughed Stovich cheerfully, as he skipped out of the chair. He roared at the other's chagrin.

"It's the way I carry it," he volunteered. "You don't see no bay-window here, brother."

The weight-guesser was no longer interested, however, and Stovich wandered proudly away. He continued to glow at his ability to carry weight deceptively, until he began to wonder what had happened to Gracie. She was usually so punctual.

An hour went by. Stovich wanted to telephone her house, but he reflected that if he did so, Gracie would doubtless appear at the rendezvous and go away again the moment he entered the drug-store booth. So for another hour, he tried to figure out a solution to this dilemma. There was none. He was tired from walking up and down, but there was no place to sit. He

was hungry, but there was nothing to eat.

Hold! Just inside the amusement park stood a frankfurter stand operated by a swarthy Greek who enjoined passersby to come and get them while they were hot. Stovich meditated. It would cost him ten cents to enter the park, but there were seats inside from which he could survey the entrance. And he felt that he was starving to death. Resolutely, he found a dime and entered and made his way toward the vendor of hot dogs.

But ere he approached, several small boys, possessed of many devils and an unreasonable antipathy to Greeks, swooped down on the stand and gathered up a dozen frankfurters that were toasting on the griddle; running away again faster than Balaam traversed the blue fields of Jerusalem. The proprietor uttered a terrible shriek and gave chase, calling God and man to his assistance. But the boys, anticipating pursuit, had stationed a large band of confederates among some trees hard by the stand. This auxiliary party now made a hasty sortie and began a successful sack of the establishment; perceiving which, the bewildered and bedeviled Greek turned from one pursuit to another, and so lost his chance to capture either or any of

the robber band. Delirious with rage and disappointment, he was taking stock of his frankfurters as Stovich drew nigh.

The latter listened patiently to a long tale of injustices, delivered entirely in Greek, while a fresh hot dog was being roasted and inserted into a bun. It was heavily anointed with mustard and a pint of chow-chow at Stovich's request and under his personal supervision. He accepted it eagerly and took a large and greedy bite without preliminary payment.

"Say!" cried the Greek in no uncertain tones, "that's fifteen cents!"

Stovich nodded, being wholly unable to reply, and complacently reached for the pocket in which he kept his small change. It was empty, his last dime having been spent for admission to the park. The Greek watched his movements with catlike concern and growing alarm.

Stovich smiled with renewed assurance. He reached for his wallet — and stopped dead.

He sensed, rather than felt, a large emptiness in his back pocket. His jaw dropped; he stood as one stricken of the palsy.

"Well?" said the Greek ominously.

"It's gone!" cried Stovich. "My

wallet! — with a hundred dollars in it!”

“Yes!” mocked the hot-dog entrepreneur. “Well, never mind your hundred dollars! How about my fifteen cents?”

“I had it,” shouted Stovich, “when I left the jail!”

This remark was unfortunate, for at the word “jail” the Greek considered that he was again the victim of lawbreakers and leaped halfway across the counter to seize what was left of the hot dog from Stovich’s shaking fingers.

Not content with the recovery of his property, he hurled it full into Stovich’s face with a great resultant splatter of chow-chow and mustard sauce. Blinded for a moment, Stovich offered no resistance and did not wake up to his peril until the Greek, thoroughly angered by the vicissitudes of the day, jumped over the counter and punched him in the eye, screaming loudly for the police. Another and another blow followed the first. By the time the police came, one of Stovich’s eyes was closed and some very costly bridge-work was a total wreck.

The police separated them and listened to his story. Painfully, he went over the events of the day in an effort to recall when and where his pocket had been plucked. Suddenly, and with a great light,

he remembered the exploratory technique of the weight-guesser.

He was all for leading the officers to the spot at once, but they assured him that it would be a great mistake for a man of his position to appear on the street in such a bruised and be-mustarded condition, and persuaded him to wash his face first of all. While he was doing this, the sergeant sneaked down the street and warned the weight-guesser to get out of sight for the next few minutes. When Stovich conducted the police to the scene, the trimmers were far away, chair, tripod, wallet, and all.

VI

Stovich accompanied the officers to the police station to make a report. While there, he made free use of the telephone to call up Gracie. The landlady at her boarding house answered.

“Why, I thought you knew!” she exclaimed in response to Stovich’s inquiry. “Gracie’s on her honeymoon!”

Stovich was speechless for a full moment.

“What’s the joke?” he demanded thickly when words came.

“I’m not joking,” responded the landlady. “They left for Niagara

Falls this afternoon — she and Ernest Fink.”

“Is that so?” roared Stovich. “What about my seventeen hundred dollars?”

“What about it?” asked the landlady, sourly.

Stovich swayed and hung up.

None of the policemen would lend him carfare, and so he walked home. It was eight miles to the Y. M. C. A. Hotel. He reached the place at 11 P.M. The night clerk was on duty.

“Why, Mr. Stovich!” he exclaimed, noting the Serbian sunset under his left eye. “Did you get hurt?”

“You’re a smart guy, ain’t you!” Stovich snarled, and retired to his room.

Long he sat there and pondered on the futility of life. Almost a year of pinching and scrimping and hard work for a dirty, sneaking, double-crossing snake in the grass that he had treated like a white woman. Nothing had been too good for her. She could have had anything she wanted. Why? — because he had trusted her, and this is what he got. As far as that

smirking, sneaking, smart-aleck husband of hers was concerned — well. . . .

He laughed. It was a hollow, bitter laugh. Mechanically, he began to undress. In detaching his watch and chain, he felt a bulge in his vest pocket and discovered the cigar Ernest had given him after the execution.

He was about to fling it from the open window when he was restrained by sober second thought. That particular cigar had cost him just seventeen hundred dollars — almost a full year’s hard work. It was the most expensive cigar ever made. He stared ironically at the brown wrapper and the gaily-colored band. He wondered how it would feel to smoke a seventeen-hundred-dollar cigar. Still wondering, he bit savagely at the end and struck a match.

As he might have expected, it was a piece of rope. Well, rope was his specialty. . . . He smiled grimly at the jest and took a long, hard pull.

There was a blinding flash and a deafening report as the cigar exploded.



STEEL *vs.* JOHN L. LEWIS

BY GORDON CARROLL

EVERY time John L. Lewis, beetle-browed labor entrepreneur and president of the United Mine Workers, mounts the rostrum and commences exhorting the 531,000 steel workers of America to join up with his new Committee for Industrial Organization, he flirts with the juicy vision of six to nine million dollars which would accrue to his lodge in the event of the complete unionization of the industry. When he stands before a microphone and excoriates the steelmasters who allegedly manipulate their company unions in order to grind the proletariat, he is in a position to envisage himself as the future dictator of all American labor, with powers so vast that he might swap threats as well as repartee with the House of Morgan. On the frequent occasions when he sits in a smoke-filled convention hall and argues the finer points of union dogma with his arch-enemies, the conservatives in the American Federation of Labor, he glows with the warm inner fire of a practical politician who has

maneuvered his opponents into a tight spot from which they can extricate themselves only by making diplomatic concessions. John L. Lewis, in a word, is the full flowering of a twentieth-century type: a shrewd, platinum-tongued rabble-rouser, born of labor politics and sired by union patronage, who presents himself as champion of the underprivileged so that he may perhaps in time become the greatest *Führer* the underprivileged have ever known. Always in the background, as he crusades and preaches, is the dream of a political Man of Destiny.

It is all the more strange, then, that the current clash of Labor and Capital in the steel industry, under way on a wide front, should be accepted by the public as just another chapter in a traditional struggle between two blustering but unyielding enemies. For the conflict which Mr. Lewis is now engaged in fomenting has little in common with the imbroglios of former years: it is a new kind of class-war into which elements from all sec-

tions of the population will be drawn; it has for its principal aim not the emancipation of the American worker, *per se*, but the control of all wage-earners under the horny hand of a Labor Dictator. It is backed covertly by the Roosevelt Administration; it is being waged behind a smokescreen of bluff and chicanery; and it has for its first objective a victory by propaganda over the employers in American industry.

The publicized issues in the Steel Workers Organizing Committee's campaign, as in all clashes between the Downtrodden and the Boss, are the closed shop, more money in the pay envelope, and improved working conditions. Mr. Lewis, of course, promises all these concomitants of Utopia to every steel worker who will enroll in his benevolent order: if the pay envelope is thin, he will make it fatter; if the exploited worker toils a full eight hours a day, he will cut it to six; if the laborer's home in the smoke-stained hills of Pennsylvania or Ohio is not the equal of Buckingham Palace, he will make it so. As for the recent ten per cent wage increase granted to the industry, that is ridiculed as mere blood-money, wrung from the gold bags of frightened executives.

Now on the surface, all this is

very plausible propaganda indeed, and John L. and his go-getters of the SWOC overlook no opportunity to hammer home their Message to the Masses. But for any informed person to believe such rubbish is precisely the same as believing that Joseph Stalin introduced the Stakhanov speed-up system into Soviet Russia's industry for the sole purpose of presenting gun-metal watches to prize-winning shock-workers. What John L. really craves is power — political power — and this calls for a high cash outlay on the American market today. So in order to meet the ante and get his blue chips on the table, Mr. Lewis is directing a ruthless drive to regiment the steel workers, happy in the knowledge that \$1.50 per month from each in the form of union dues would go a long ways toward greasing the skids on which Presidential booms are launched in this money-mad Republic.

That Mr. Lewis chose the steel industry as the opening wedge in his struggle for national prestige was not a haphazard gamble, for the propaganda field in Steel has been briskly fertilized by Liberal and Radical writers since the days of the late Henry C. Frick and Allan Pinkerton. Indeed, a considerable portion of the American

reading public has been led to believe that all steelmasters are sclerotic plutocrats, who carouse in private railway cars, swill champagne, and light their coronas-coronas with \$100 bills, while the laborers of the roaring steel mills are muscle-bound robots, born to poverty and despair, and deprived by the Capitalist Bosses of all but the barest necessities of life. This is the distorted picture which John L. now exhibits with tears in his eyes, and as such it is given widespread credence.

Furthermore, the steel industry, being a vital component in America's economic structure, is an important stepping stone on the path to a complete regimentation of all Labor. Mr. Lewis is acutely aware of this fact, and utilizes it in his strategic scheme to capture ultimately, for the CIO, the motor, textile, and rubber industries. As Steel goes, so might the nation go — and when the shooting was over, John L. would reign supreme, either from the plush-lined offices of the SWOC in a gaudy Pittsburgh skyscraper, or from an ivory tower on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington. For no matter what the outcome of the current steel conflict or of the internecine strife now convulsing the A. F. of L., Labor's Man of Destiny is not go-

ing to quit the field in the event of a preliminary setback. He has his eyes on the moon; no less will satisfy him. If, in the process of making this celestial haul, he brings new hardships to the ranks of the Downtrodden, that is the latter's misfortune. Like all Radical messiahs, past and present, John L. will gild his own political perch before turning to the less esoteric business of weather-proofing the American workingman's home.

II

The Left-wing's history of Labor *vs.* Steel, particularly in the Pennsylvania area, concentrates on strikes, lock-outs, riots, sabotage, and bloodshed, with the overtones of policemen's thudding boots and the wails of terrified women and children. Under Left-wing tutelage, nothing good has ever been written about the steelmasters; nothing probably ever will be. But if the truth were to be told, the executives of the industry are, in a sense, the same sort of men as the Radical organizers now baying at their flanks. That is to say, they are practical gentlemen interested in making money from the business they represent. If, in this process of producing profits, the penalty of toil is inflicted upon Labor, it

is no different from the treatment accorded one of John L.'s rowdy organizers when he returns from the nearest steel mill with \$10 in SWOC dues in his pocket instead of the more welcome \$100. In a word, Steel is a hard business, of and by hard men; it has never been represented as on a plane with crocheting; it demands of its workers, as well as of its executives, an unmalleable point of view.

This hardness, so to speak, is a tradition in the industry. Steel was founded in a rough-and-ready era of American history when the employer, *i.e.*, the Capitalist Boss, took advantage of every weakness in Labor's ranks. No informed person today denies that the gargantuan growth of the business was attended by exploitation, oppression, and cruelty. But since 1910, there has come about an improvement in the relationship between Labor and Steel, caused by fresh sociological ideas, by the laws of modern economics, and by that indefinable but irresistible tendency of mankind to better itself. The result is that today, the steelmaster is in a more liberal frame of mind than ever before; he is more eager to solve the problems of Labor, more willing to adopt practical suggestions toward that end. This change of heart is not due entirely,

as the Radicals fiercely assert, to a hope of forestalling the inevitable Revolution, nor can it be laid in an equal sense to a desire for further exploitation of Labor under the guise of humanitarianism. If the steelmaster is looking after his own interests, he is looking after the interests of his employee with equal fervor, so that both may profit.

A few statistics will help to clarify the picture. For example, in October, 1936, total employment in the steel industry was 531,400, on the basis of a 42.5-hour week. Payrolls for the month amounted to \$71,110,000, of which about \$59,650,000 went to Mr. Lewis' potential converts—the wage-earners. Payrolls from January 1 to October 31 were \$611,900,000, indicating that the year's total passed well beyond the \$765,000,000 figure. As a result of the recent ten per cent pay increase in the industry, the average hourly rate of wage-earners approximates 73.0 cents per hour, an all-time high. What these fancy figures mean, when translated into terms of the industry's gross sales income, is that 41 cents of each dollar go to payrolls, 41 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents to materials and other expenses, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents to depreciation, 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents to taxes, 2 cents to interest, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents to surplus, and, last, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents to the allegedly bloated stockholders.

(During the worst phases of the Depression, dividends were reduced from \$189,000,000 in 1929 to \$11,000,000 in 1933, a decrease of 94.3 per cent.)

As to wages in Steel compared to other industries, they have remained measurably above the national average since 1879, ranging from a low of \$394 to a high of \$1742. Comparing the earnings of the American steel worker to those of his brethren abroad, the former, in 1934, averaged 64.7 cents per hour. The next highest wage was paid in Sweden — 29 cents. From this point, the average ranges downward to lows of 9.7 cents in Japan and 8.6 in India.

In the field of social security, the industry expended \$200,000,000 for the six-year period, 1929-1935, the same period during which a few steel companies earned slim profits while the majority absorbed heavy losses. More than \$61,000,000 has been distributed in pensions since 1910. None of the various pension plans exacts contributions from employees; every dollar paid out comes from the company's till. Those corporations which do not operate pension plans make other provisions for veteran workers, such as carrying them on the payroll in nominal jobs after their active years are ended.

But in addition to such welfare programs, there is one characteristic of the business which takes pre-eminence: the opportunity for every earnest, competent employee to work his way to the top. This is a traditional privilege in the American scheme of living, a vital component of the capitalist system which the CIO is now so bitterly attacking. A recent survey revealed that 163 out of 176 steel executives started their careers at the bottom. Carnegie, for example, began as a bobbin boy; Gary was a farmer's son; Schwab entered the business as a stake-driver for a surveying corps; Irwin was a shipping clerk, Grace a crane operator, Weir an office boy, Dalton a clerk, Young a laborer, Girdler a millhand. Out of the entire list of 176 executives, only thirteen entered Steel in the upper brackets.

None of these pertinent socio-economic facts, of course, is ever mentioned by John L.'s organizers when they take the stump in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and way stations. It is much headier — and more productive of SWOC recruits — to concentrate on shorter hours, higher wages, boss favoritism, shop spies, terrorism, and the New Deal. A pungent soapbox crack about Myron Taylor and his villa in Cannes brings out more

dimes and quarters for the collection box than all the statistical evidence collected in the past fifty years. Mr. Lewis, in other words, does not deal in facts; he deals in promises. And no one knows better than he that promises are the most plentiful commodity in the Labor market today.

But leaving aside the matter of John L.'s factual accuracy, we come finally to the question of company unions *vs.* the closed shop, which is, after all, the rock on which Mr. Lewis stands, and from which he will either commence his ascent to high places or fall off into the well of obscurity. The company union, according to the SWOC, is the most vicious Labor scheme ever concocted by man. It has been blamed for most of the ills in the steel business—and a number of other misadventures as remote from the industry as the silkworm trade of Japan. The main charge leveled against the company union is that it leads to exploitation, through bringing the worker under the employer's thumb. That is to say, the elected shop representatives, who serve without pay, are potential straw bosses, fearful for their jobs yet hoping to work up into the \$25,000-a-year class by fawning on the overlords. The resulting inference

is simple: that company unions are operated by the Bosses for the sole purpose of spying upon and circumventing Labor.

Like most Radical assertions, there is here a minimum of truth and a maximum of distortion. The company-union plan, as it functions today throughout the steel industry, is the most practical method of collective bargaining so far conceived, unless it can be shown that *outside* control of a shop union is more beneficial. Mr. Lewis is eager at all times to prove this controverted point, yet his evidence to date is far from convincing. His plan, in brief, is to place in each plant a CIO union, which will be controlled by forces entirely unrelated to that plant. Translated into plain language, this means that the lives, jobs, and economic security of thousands of American workers will be subject to the whims and political ambitions of an irremovable *Führer*, who is answerable to no one but himself and his hand-picked board of union agents. Mr. Lewis naturally denies this self-evident charge; he paints a rosy future in which the Laborer and his Labor Master will share the wealth and bring an end to all human misery. But if recent experiences in American government and industry may

be cited, the operation of any such dictatorial scheme would result in exploitation far beyond that charged to the Bosses today.

Other criticisms of the company-union plan allege that employee representation is not tenable because the worker chooses his representative free of charge. That is to say, there are no dues to pay, no initiation fees, no special funds, no monthly check-off on the pay envelope. Yet is there any valid reason why negotiation with the management should cost anything? Certainly the steel corporations can afford to print ballots and set aside floor space where workers may hold elections. In addition, the company union justifies itself by the fact that annually it is possible to learn, by means of elections, whether the employees are satisfied with the office-holders who currently represent them. In other words, an inefficient shop representative, under the present plan, can be sacked every twelve-month; a self-appointed dictator of all Labor could not.

Hence the organization question posed by Mr. Lewis and his soap-box messiahs becomes one not of fact but of ideology. John L. believes that the steel worker will get better service from casting his lot with outside labor organizations,

controlled by dues-seeking executives. The companies believe that the best interests of everyone will be served by a continuance of the free system now in effect. Unhappily, this deadlock leaves the recipient of all the attention—the steel worker—in a violent cross-fire. If he gets out safely with his shirt, he will be lucky.

III

The passing of the Depression more or less delivered the steel workers from hard times. Today, up in the soot-streaked hills and valleys of Pennsylvania, conditions are not so turbulent as the Radicals would have the outside world believe. The steel plants are operating close to capacity, the workers are handling fat pay envelopes once more, the towns are prosperous, the highways are filled with new cars. Everywhere there is an air, a notice, that the Depression is over. Against this new feeling of confidence, Mr. Lewis is throwing the weight of propaganda and discontent. Perhaps he has waited too long; certainly his raucous efforts would have been more successful two or three years ago, or even in the Winter of 1935. But the steel worker today looks upon Utopian promises with a fishy eye; he has been fed on

promises for years; he has seen what has happened to other Labor messiahs in their attempts to gain almighty power; and he is inclined to be highly skeptical of what John L. may accomplish.

These steel towns of Pennsylvania are not so different from towns of equal size elsewhere in the United States. There are slums in evidence; but there are also clean, well-kept streets, fringed by trim homes, not all of which belong to straw bosses. There are mountainous piles of corroded slag serrating the countryside; but there are also, within the towns, recreation parks, swimming pools, tennis courts, baseball diamonds, and movie theaters. Thousands of begrimed workmen pour through the mill gates morning, afternoon, and night; but they are pretty much the same as the workmen who pour through mill gates everywhere, every day, from Boston to San Diego. They are precisely what they appear to be — American laborers. And if thousands of them drive to and from the mills in new, streamlined automobiles, it is merely another indication that the specter of poverty has departed the Monongahela Valley.

Inside the plants, there is no indication of a congenital, feverish discontent. There is, to be sure,

bellyaching and grouching, in direct proportion to that heard everywhere; but it is an unalienable right of the American workman to grouse at everything, from the Boss down to the salami sandwiches his wife put in the lunch pail. The percentage of malcontents in Steel is probably the same as in any other business — say, ten per cent. These are the implacable enemies of every man who has money in the bank, the Boss-haters, the lazy, the unfit, and the down-at-the-heel Radical agitators. These are the fellows who have gotten onto Mr. Lewis' payroll; they can be found any time of day or night protesting against the Cruelty of Work; they harangue the workers when the mill gates open and the homeward rush commences. On Sundays and legal holidays, they stage SWOC meetings, ladling out propaganda with the free beer and hot-dogs. They distribute gaudy handbills in village poolrooms and barber shops, and occasionally hire a radio truck, over the tin trumpets of which they rally the workers to fight the Exploiters of the Masses.

But downtown in Pittsburgh, where John L.'s organizers confer about the Coming Revolution, the tone is not so blatant. Here, on the thirty-sixth floor of the monolithic Grant Building, in a haze of cigar

smoke and an atmosphere of new furniture and thick carpets, a stream of surly workers shuffles endlessly, each with a mumbling complaint or a suggestion. The CIO men they talk with are experts at the sympathy racket; they disperse pledges with one hand and take funds with the other. Among them are familiar Radical hacks in past labor wars — ex-straw bosses, union agents, collectors, malcontents, and ham orators — all now dedicated to the task of fomenting the Class-War. The Communist element is particularly active. In an endless flood, the Comrades issue statements, press releases, tear sheets, handbills — anything that serves to stir hatred, anything that helps the Cause. The fact that the bulk of this material is rubbish bothers them not at all. Indeed, the mimeograph machines are hard pressed to keep up with the flow of irresponsible vituperation and exaggeration.

Yet it is perhaps in this very sense of irresponsibility that the SWOC finds its greatest strength. Mr. Lewis, in his holy crusade against Steel, acts as a one-man corporation against a multi-officered organization. He can decide instantly on a plan of campaign; he can act with a single motivation; he has no one to answer to but himself — and the

Radical agents traveling at his heels. With this freedom from responsibility, his battle is simplified. His opponents, who speak not only for themselves but for American industry at large, must consider each move in advance, must weigh each statement in the light of public reaction.

Here, then, lies the crux of the present Steel-Labor conflict. If Mr. Lewis rides to victory on a wave of propaganda, his triumph will be gained behind a smokescreen of vast dimensions. The real forces and desires at work in the background have been concealed to date. The fight is not one between Capital and Labor, as extensively advertised, but between the system of free enterprise and a Labor dictatorship. The former brings to the employee a reasonable degree of security and permanency; the latter creates unreasonable oppression and hardship.

The workers in Steel, of course, cannot be expected to discern the flaws in John L.'s promissory Utopia. But the American public, if it takes a hand in the matter, can help vitally in disclosing the wide abyss that extends between rabble-rousing on the one hand and a genuine improvement in the American workingman's status on the other.

HORSE-AND-BUGGY DAYS

BY DELLA T. LUTES

THE horse and buggy was a primitive means of transportation, to be sure, but it took us places where neither the airplane nor the automobile seem ever to find the way. And it left us imperishable memories which none of the modern conveyances can ever evoke. The child of today who is transported on mechanical wings from port to port will have impressions of flying landscapes, swift, unwinding ribbons of concrete, glimpses of jewelled lake or shadowed hill, but with the effect of a blurred etching, a confused impact as of one film overlaid upon another, rather than of a thousand sharp vignettes.

Just riding to town on the high spring seat of a lumber wagon with my father was more exciting than any breath-taking excursion covering a like period of time that I have taken since. The contents of the wagon would lead to barter and trade, to strange adventures in the market place, to humorous and salty converse with men; and, at the end of a moderately busy day,

the same road, rough, sandy, and, as measured by standards of today, long, but familiar as my mother's face, would take us—home. Countless such simple journeys led us, in fact, to mill and to meeting, to the observance of *amor patriae*, and to more shades and degrees of amusement and entertainment than I have met with in the years between.

Such, for instance, as the Fourth of July celebration. To observe properly this national tribute to our present status of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, we went *en famille* (which included the hired man and anyone else who happened to be either visiting us or working for us) and we took our dinner. For the convenience of numbers we went in the Democrat, a light vehicle comparable perhaps to the beach wagon of today. It was drawn by a team of horses, and besides the two capacious seats comfortably filled, there was plenty of room for the bag of oats for the horses and baskets of dinner for us. There would be, as I remember

certain occasions, my mother and myself with Mis' Lou Esty on the back seat, the hired man and my father in front. Mis' Lou Esty was the seamstress who spent weeks at a time in the various homes of the neighborhood.

The Fourth of July celebration was an event fraught with meaning. There would be the Procession — wagons, often with a hayrack attached, decorated with colored bunting — drawn by horses whose twitching ears were tickled by rosettes of red, white, and blue, and carrying a load of pretty girls dressed in white, with sashes of the national colors. Another wagon was one in which Columbia rode majestically alone, her tall form draped in folds of white with the colors across her shoulder, a golden crown upon her head, and a silver staff in her hands. Interspersed were the marching band, the dashing Zouaves, the G. A. R.'s, stepping, as yet, with proud, unhalting foot. Up the street they went and down the street they came so our enraptured eyes might see them twice, finally to take their places in the Square, where the Governor would make a speech and the best orator amongst the preachers would read the Declaration.

No firecrackers were shot off

during the Exercises and hundreds of people, including children, stood reverently to listen. We were being told why we celebrated this day, what the Declaration had done for us, what it meant to have a Constitution of the United States, and why we must abide by it. It was, we were told, the annual observation of an event that had meant sanctuary of homes, national and personal freedom, and a right to live, unmolested, in this lovely, fruitful State of Michigan. We were filled with gratitude and respect, and we thrilled at the thought of our inheritance.

When the speeches and the reading and the singing of *Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean* were over, when the band had played *Oh, Say Can You See* and *America*, we turned and walked to the back street where our team was left and drove over to the Mound to eat our lunch.

The Mound was a grove of oak trees on a little rise of ground which we flatland people were pleased to call a hill. It was near the spot where the Republican Party was born under the famous Three Oaks. Here we unhitched the horses, took the bits from their mouths, and gave them their oats and some fresh grass. Then Mis' Esty and my mother took out the

dinner baskets and spread the blue-and-white cloth on the ground. And out of the baskets they took plates and cups and saucers and knives and forks and spoons. And out of the eloquently odored rolls of toweling and napkins they took such food as to remember excites the futile weeping of my jaws. Bread — started on its savory way the night before, and baked by my mother in the earliest hour of the morning. Butter — churned yesterday and kept cold in a bucket let down into the cavernous depths of the well, brought forth the last thing before starting and put in a small stone jar with wet burdock leaves around it. Cold chicken — boiled the day before and fried in butter. Cold hard-boiled eggs as if the one should complement the other to the last. Pickled beets — young, sweet globes of garnet hardly larger than the bantam's egg that had been boiled for me. Green onions — not scallions now — these are gone to seed, but the slender striplings that have been thinned from the field, with salt and pepper mixed together and wrapped in a paper. Cherries picked fresh from the overloaded trees that very morning by the hired man, while my father was changing from overall and wam'us to Sunday clothes and white shirt.

Cookies — the big white sugar kind with fluted edges and a raisin in the center. An apple pie — young green apple pie made from Yellow Transparents — the first to ripen, the choicest of early apples for pie. Apple pie to which I bow my head in almost reverent memory because its like is nearly passed from even the memory of men, as are the buggy and the Democrat wagon. Pie with a crust into which you set your teeth delicately, as a man fingers jewels precious to the touch, in order to taste it to the full; or as one lifting with delicate sense of taste the veil to inner shrines of sweetness.

While we eat we hear the increasing pop of firecrackers, the less frequent boom of the cannon which the boys are firing from the Common where thistles grow. Our dinner eaten, we go back to the scene of festivity. My father drives the horses to the livery stable. It is hot, the flies bother them, and they would be made nervous by the increasing noise. Then we go together, my father and the hired man walking in front, my mother and Mis' Esty becomingly bringing up the rear, me between them. We line up to the curb to watch the fun — the potato race, the sack race, the one-legged race, climbing a greased pole, chasing a greased

pig; we listen to the shouts and yells and laughter and the constant popping of crackers. We drink lemonade from a stand and eat popcorn from a street vendor.

Tired, happy, filled with blissful content, we finally take to the road again. The horses, however, are fresh and eager. There is a well-filled manger awaiting them and they cover the miles with speed, or what, in that day, was accounted speed. On the way, as we come to the top of a little hill, we look over our shoulders to see a skyrocket zoom its way into the darkening sky. "*O-o-oh!*" Another and another. The sky reddens. But the horses are not interested in fireworks and we slip beyond sight of the display, and without regret, for beyond lies home. We do not talk much. There is nothing to talk about. What we have seen and heard is accepted, has played its part in the fabrication of our lives. There *was* a Revolution. Wise and great men *did* write a Declaration. Other wise and great men drew up a Constitution of the United States. These heritages they left to us. Also the land over which we are driving, the home toward which we are going. We *are* Americans. There is no questioning, no quibbling, no carping, no befuddling our minds with this dissatisfaction or that

doubt. Better men than we had fought the fight for us and given their reasons for doing it. The least we could do was to abide gratefully.

We are at home. We unhitch the horses, unharness them, put them in the barn, give them fresh bedding, and feed them. We roll the wagon into the shed. We enter the house — by the kitchen door — eat our supper and go to bed. We are content. The horse and wagon have done us a good turn today. They took us where there was entertainment as well as inspiration, and brought us home with a feeling of renewed gratefulness for the land in which we live.

II

The wagon, a still sturdier vehicle than the Democrat, functioned actively in the maintenance of life. It hauled our grain and hay from field to barn. It took our grist to mill and fetched back the meal and flour from which were made those breads and cakes now rapidly becoming only a memory.

Going to mill was never a task but always a joy, to man or child. We took buckwheat to mill, for instance, and brought back buckwheat flour from which our mothers made pancakes the like of

which no modern urban dweller ever saw. And cooked with them sausage made from the hogs raised on our own farms, fattened on our own corn, whose hams and shoulders were being smoked in our own smokehouses.

Going to mill was one of the pleasantest journeys I have ever made in my life. The miller was a gray and dusty man; his floors were ashen with flying flour, and worn to the texture of satin by human feet. The water made a happy roar as it came over the flume; the wheel turned with a splash like a giant bullhead flopping about the pond at dusk. My father talked with the miller while I watched the wheel turn, the water fall.

Going to the cider mill was even pleasanter — one of those leisurely tasks pertaining to farm life that came after the bustle of seeding, harvesting, threshing was over and a man could take the remainder of his preparatory chores more at his ease. Winter was not far away, bins and barrels must be filled, but there would be plenty of time. Such jobs as picking apples, digging potatoes, husking corn, flailing beans, making cider — these would fill the fragrant October days to the very last, but they were mainly likeable jobs performed with a

rhythmical synchronization. The tempo of activity had pleasantly slowed.

When I give myself time in which to remember those golden days of Autumn when we, first, filled the wagon with apples from the fragrant orchard, and then, mounting the high spring seat, rolled leisurely away along the narrow country road toward the cider mill, I am filled with regret that modern youngsters are so impoverished for opportunity that they must haul up to a hideous little stand beside a dangerous thoroughfare to swill down some villainous, synthetic liquid tainted in color and insipid in taste. How little do they know — can ever know — of the serene delight in jogging along a narrow country road where upon the hazel brush little brown fuzzy clusters are ripening, soon to be gathered along with walnuts, butternuts, and hickory nuts and stored in the garret for Winter use. Of the thrill with which we come within sound and sight — and smell — of the old cider mill on the creek. How little can they ever know of that rich delectable flavor which meets the itching tongue as the miller hands you a mug of pure, unadulterated juice, fresh-made from apples grown on your own land, gathered by your

own hands. Poor, deprived, satiated, unsatisfied modern generations! All their streamlined cars with their multiple cylinders can never take them to pleasanter — or safer — places than our old Studebaker wagon took us.

III

Winter with its snow brought out the two-bob sleigh, the cutter, and the pung. The pung was a short wooden box set on single runners and drawn by one or two horses. It was used by farmers to haul wood from the wood lot, or for other short loads. It was also used for social purposes as when of a Sunday it was swept of wood and bark and filled with clean straw and the comforting assurance that it would get us to Uncle Frank's house, in spite of drifts and ruts, in time for the Sunday chicken and dumplings, and safely home again for the evening chores.

These are only a scattering of the thousand-and-one of our dependencies upon the horse and buggy. We went to funerals in buggies — and we moved in a manner befitting the occasion. The hearse led, black and somber, drawn by black horses with black plumes. We went to weddings and housewarmings and sociables and ice-cream festi-

vals and Sunday School picnics; to the County Fair where we met all our relatives on a certain day, never premeditated but always definite. Courting was done in the buggy and the cutter. We went to church in the buggy. You did not enjoy the long sermons particularly, but there was nothing to be done about it except to listen — or not to listen. But always there were the neighbors to meet in the intermission between church and Sunday School, and the churchyard where the boys and girls wandered, sometimes gathering a sprig of myrtle or a spray of rosemary to be treasured until this day. And behind the act of going to church was religion. Good old orthodox religion. We believed in God and Heaven and Punishment, and we behaved ourselves accordingly. We read the Bible, and we heard it read at home. And we neither doubted nor questioned it. The horse and buggy was allied to conscientious earthly living and to our hope of immortality. Men did not live in constant fear of death, because they believed in life.

The horse and buggy contributed to our pleasure in contemplating the world in which we lived. Our roads were dusty in Summer, rutty in Spring, and drifted with snow in Winter. But at least we

saw what was alongside the road, and what was beyond the road. We had time and leisure in which to inspect the growth of running blackberries along the way — ripe in another week; to watch the fireflies over the meadow when coming home belatedly from a Sunday visit to Aunt Hanner, and the Johnny Jump-ups that bloomed alongside the road in June. We could even see the shining minnows in the shallow of the brook as we drove slowly across, and noted that the blue sweetflag was in blossom. Sweetflag made good chewing, pleasanter than slippery elm.

And there was the diversion of driving through the shallows at one side of the bridge where Grand River crossed the road. You drove through to cool the horse and let him drink, and to give the drying wheels a little soak. Besides, it was

fun. You did a good many things for fun those days — simple little things like stopping the horse while you got out to pick some sassafras buds or wintergreen berries. You could *see* things while you were still passing them and had time to stop if you wanted to — not just to get an impression of something you would like to have seen, but did not realize until you were past, traveling at sixty miles per hour.

Our roads were primitive and poor, but they led to honesty. They led also to loyalty. Our neighbors were our friends and they came to us as we went to them both for companionship and in need. They led to reverence, respect, devotion. They led to content. And all these were found, as the slow-moving horse and buggy followed the winding road, over the hill and along the way to home.



CRIME AS A PROFESSION

BY FLETCHER PRATT

THE comparison between European and American police systems, so frequently made to the great disadvantage of the latter, may be said to contain one element of utility — it calls attention to the fact that such comparison is essentially impossible to set up. For in the long run your police force reflects not any abstract standard of conduct, but the general character of the civilization it protects.

American civilization, the American ability for combination and business organization upon a large scale, has presented the police with a problem of professionalized crime which has no European parallel and which is, essentially, not a police problem. The critics of law and order forces overlook the fact that the American police have made amateur crime absolutely unsafe to the criminal; and amateur crime is the only sort Europe knows. The cleverest stick-up, penman, or dummy-chucker the Continent ever produced would hardly last a week in Chicago.

Our police forces are superior to

any on earth; American detectives come from a more intelligent class than those of Europe. Nowhere in the world does the force contain so many university graduates, and nowhere do they make so much use of the latest developments in psychology or so frequently enroll the help of criminological laboratories. Moreover, our police are backed by magnificent private detective organizations like the Burns and Pinkerton agencies, which have no imitators across the sea, where private detectives are more often than not stooges for divorce and blackmail rackets.

Yet there remains the paradoxical fact that with the exception of the three great crime specialties of Western Europe — burglary in England, confidence work in France and Spain, and mass-murder with overtones of cannibalism in Germany — the United States statistically leads the civilized world in every type of unsolved crime, both absolutely and *per capita*. The catch lies in the word "unsolved", which has ac-

quired a special meaning not contemplated by the dictionary, an unsolved crime being one for which nobody has gone to jail. If one accepts the ordinary meaning of the word, there is very little unsolved crime in the United States. There has hardly been a major infraction against property or person during the last decade which is not fully comprehended by the police in all its details, including motive, method, and guilty person.

Yet general statistics reveal that if you commit a murder in the United States you stand a fifty per cent chance of never being tried, better than a seventy per cent chance of not being convicted, and something like a ninety per cent chance of receiving no heavier punishment than five years in prison.

II

It is usual to divide the blame for this condition between the police and legal establishments, and there is a certain amount of seepage through sentimental juries, clever advocacy, and antiquated legal procedure. Yet in the long run the gap is rather between arrest and conviction than between trial and conviction. The record of almost any notorious criminal shows a long list of arrests with "Discharged,

Magistrate Blank" in melancholy procession after each. Gerald Chapman was arrested eight times before visiting a prison; Al Capone "beat the rap" without trial in a dozen cases, several of them homicides; and Fiorenza, the murderer of Nancy Evans Titterton, had a record of seven arrests but only two convictions.

These long records of arrest do not look like inefficient police work unless it can be charged that the police consistently arrest the wrong man or that they are so poor at preparing evidence for the courts that in half of all murder cases and a still higher percentage of other cases they fail to present enough to induce a magistrate to commit for trial.

Both these contingencies, however, are extremely unlikely. If innocent parties were constantly being hauled in by the *schupos*, not even a New Dealer could afford to pay off the suits for false arrest. And if the police were consistently clumsy about preparing evidence, we should expect to find the discharges between arrest and trial running highest in those rural jurisdictions where officers have the least training. The reverse is the case: the discharges on eminent criminals' records come from the big cities — New York, Chicago,

Los Angeles, Toledo — where the police are the best trained and have at their disposal the services of the ablest legal advisers.

Hence, if the trouble is not police inefficiency, the irresistible conclusion must be that it is criminal efficiency. This efficiency seems to have been achieved by an inversion or perversion of the very American business methods which have made our police capable — organization, good professional advice, and the use of scientific research. Crime in America, in a word, has become professionalized.

The instant one views American crime, or the portion of American crime that eludes justice, as a highly organized profession, the whole puzzling picture clears up; the paradox of police forces so efficient they can discover who committed almost any given crime, yet so inefficient that they can obtain convictions in less than half their cases — that paradox ceases to exist. For it becomes obvious that it is the professional criminal who escapes; the amateur, the occasional European free-lance who ventures over here, gets caught.

It was recently the fashion to claim that the big racketeering gangs were an outgrowth of Prohibition. This is highly dubious; there were too many factors at

work for any one to be so predominant, and a fairly good analogy can be drawn between the rise of the gangs after the late European unpleasantness and the carpetbaggers following the Civil War. No doubt the development of gang technique was greatly aided by the fact that the gangsters of Prohibition times were unofficial soldiers in a conflict against the unpopular Amendment in the big cities — but nothing more is sure. Thus it is technique that marks the difference between the amateur crime of Europe and the professionalized illegalism of America. That technique is new in the world and is based on a three-plank platform: (1) The American business tradition of service in exchange for the customer's dollars; (2) avoidance of enterprises that will arouse widespread indignation and the reprisals of an angry citizenry; and (3) protection through perjury, both in the direct and constructive forms — with two minor plans, reward for merit and/or experience, and good legal service.

Of the major points the first two are closely interwoven. The big gangster-racketeers discovered during Prohibition that they could count on the protection and even the active assistance of otherwise honest citizens in the commission

of certain crimes, which came to be known as "legitimate" rackets. The list of these has now been pretty thoroughly worked out, including gambling in all forms (horse-racing, especially fixed races; slot-machines; pin-ball games; the numerous forms of house-gambling, as card, dice, and wheel games; lotteries), night clubs, with or without an undertone of prostitution; labor-union organization; abortions; usury; and murder when perpetrated upon the bodies of gangsters. These rackets share the common characteristic of offering to the honest citizen something he cannot obtain legally and which he is not willing to do without. In this respect the rackets do partake of the character of legitimate business by rendering service.

Around the periphery of these legitimate rackets is a penumbra of semi-legitimate crimes, where the service is psychological or the racket painless. The purveying of alcohol has sunk to this class since November, 1933; bank-robbery rose to a semi-legitimate racket in 1932, when the Depression was widely blamed on the money-lenders. Counterfeiting has always been a semi-legitimate racket; artichokes, watermelons, kosher poultry, and other articles of produce have been subjected to monop-

olies which belong in the painless class.

On the other hand, kidnaping, which began at least as a semi-legitimate racket, is now strictly *verboden*; the hi-jacking of fur and silk trucks has disappeared; the badger game, white slavery—in general anything that brings about the intervention of the dreaded G-men—is avoided like the plague. Burglary is considered bad form and is only permitted to members of gangs as a reward for good work in other lines; stick-ups, except of banks and corporation payrolls, are frowned upon, and pocket-picking, shoplifting, second-story work, and other minor forms of crime are juvenilia in which the fledgling racketeer may gain some training, but which are not worth the attention of a good man.

So much for the racketeers' relations with the public. Their contact with the police is almost entirely covered by the third of the platform principles—perjury. They do retain the best legal talent available and that talent understands perfectly the uses of jury-fixing, endless appeals, and confusing testimony from bogus experts. But all these antics do little more than delay the issue while a solid foundation of perjury is being laid by the defense. The reason for this, of

course, is that of all the crimes in the Newgate Calendar, perjury is the one that honest citizens will most readily commit and most infrequently punish, and it is the one most difficult to prove.

For the purpose of the racketeers, constructive perjury is the most important branch. The classical alibi defense is still offered, but rather as a matter of form; it stands at fifty per cent discount with most juries. The more recent and in every way more effective method is that of reaching all witnesses to a crime and either bribing or terrorizing them into forgetfulness.

III

Lest this picture appear fanciful, let us consider a few cases. Frankie Yale's car was stopped by a red light on New York's Herald Square in broad daylight. Two men walked from the curb, fired fourteen bullets into the unfortunate Frankie, and then walked as calmly away. The police could find nobody who witnessed the murder. The \$450,000 Rubel Ice Plant hold-up in Brooklyn took place on a street opposite a line of windows opened by householders seeking relief from Summer heat; only one person observed what went on. When the durable Legs Diamond

was wounded and two other persons killed in a gunfight in a night club containing at least fifty people, neither guests nor waiters could remember that anything unusual had happened.

The great advantage of this method, from the racketeers' point of view, is that nobody is willing to do anything to upset it. It is rarely employed except in cases of inter-gang killings, the witnesses to which are already more than half convinced that it is none of their business how many gangsters eliminate each other, and even that a considerable public economy is effected in the process. Yet the inevitable result is that there come moments, like the Rubel hold-up, the escape of the Dillinger gang, or the assassination of Jake Lingle, the Chicago reporter, when racketeers overstep their own limits, but in which the defense mechanism operates with its usual efficiency.

This poison has generated two antitoxins. One is itself socially toxic and lies at the root of the frequent "discharged" notations on the record-cards of habitual criminals. Faced with the impossibility of getting anyone to bear true witness, the police arrest the suspect and try to make him a witness against himself. There is only one method of obtaining this result —

"Beat the livin' hell out of 'em." The Third Degree has never been so popular as since the growth of gang perjury, which has closed off the normal routes to witness evidence. But this is so well recognized in the courts, and defense lawyers have hammered so steadily at the point, that a confession now stands at nearly as much of a discount with juries as an alibi.

It is the second answer found by the police to the problem of perjured defense that has real importance. Fundamentally it consists in scientific circumstantial evidence. Witnesses may be bought, frightened, or impeached, but the cleverest defense cannot work these tricks on a microscope or a drop of HCl. The realization of this fact has brought about a vast development of scientific criminology during the last fifteen years. Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Tacoma set up the first elaborate police laboratories where officers are trained to do field work. Northwestern University opened the first police course; now they have become a commonplace in colleges.

The emphasis in all these courses is upon the development of material clues, as though there were a tacit agreement that personal evidence has lost value. In using this

new type of evidence, the effort seems to be in the direction of springing surprise scientific testimony, *i.e.*, building up a façade of a case without reference to it and then producing the scientist, like a rabbit from a hat. In the Hauptmann trial the prosecution gave no preliminary hint that it intended to introduce Koehler, the wood-expert; in the Lawrence inheritance case, Fiske May was not called till the last day of the trial; and in a Florida forgery case, a handwriting expert, with microphotographs and charts, popped up out of nowhere with such effect that the defending attorney threw up his brief.

It is uncertain, however, whether these methods will prove effective in curbing rackets. It depends upon how prone the police will be to use them in cases which have been regarded as exclusively the internal affairs of the racket empire, such as gang murders. Certainly, they have proved useful when the professional criminal has overstepped his self-imposed limits. At the O'Connell kidnap trial, for instance, the prosecution could not produce a single important eye-witness and the defendant was elaborately prepared with the usual alibis, but the defense was demolished before it got started by a

formidable battery of handwriting experts. In the Wright murder case, the criminal thought he had covered his tracks by wiping fingerprints from the pistol he left beside the body, but the State experts took the gun apart and developed a fine set of prints from its inner workings. "Two-Gun" Crowley was traced remorselessly from place to place by ballistic identification of the bullets he left behind whenever he clashed with the law.

These cases, unfortunately, are exceptional. The new criminology has accomplished little in dealing with the racketeers while they remain within the normal circle of their operations, though that circle has been narrowed, especially among the semi-legitimate rackets. But the rackets as a whole appear to be a social rather than a legal problem and as such have remained proof against offensives undertaken by the police alone. Yet the increased police efficiency called forth by the rackets furnishes a definite hope; it has had a collateral result of the highest importance in making amateur crime more dangerous than at any time in history. One little detail is significant: in 1932 a burglar's jimmy of the best make cost \$25 in New

York. Today the same article can be had for \$8.

The amateur, which means every criminal not connected with the big gangs, has no such elaborate devices as the professional for protecting himself. Upon his head has descended the full fury of the new police technique, and no matter how carefully he operates, he finds himself always in danger. Poisoning has practically vanished; it is a typical amateur crime and used to be one of the most popular methods of eliminating inconvenient people. The murderer of Mrs. Titterton left behind no fingerprints, nobody had seen him, yet the six-inch length of ordinary twine found at the scene tripped him when it had been subjected to scientific examination. The singular Evans-Duffy murder case in New Jersey was solved by a trigonometric calculation of the angles at which bullets had passed through a window and wall.

Success in crime demands, as it demands in other professions, considerable natural aptitude, early apprenticeship, a long period of training under capable teachers, and, finally, support of one of the big organizations. The only successful crime in America today is professional.

AMERICANA

ARKANSAS

THE proprietor of the eminent monthly *Now!* patiently explains his journalistic philosophy to the villagers of Marked Tree:

Some readers complain that items printed in *Now!* are often hard to understand. I think so myself, but if I fully understood everything I am prompted to write upon, there would be less reason to write it. In writing, the problem tends to clear up. Again it grows more perplexing and elusive, or glaringly inaccurate. But when stated it remains fixed until we can whip up our surface mental processes: and so determine values, and a line of action.

CALIFORNIA

A DARING reporter for Hollywood *Talkie-Talk* goes behind the scenes to get the low-down on the latest Beverly Hills romance:

The first time that Gene Raymond ever met Jeanette MacDonald she was standing on a doorstep ringing a doorbell. They had not been introduced, but nodded. It was at Roszika Dolly's party, about a year and a half ago. Both had come to the party alone and happened to arrive at the same time. The second time was on the doorstep

of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Swarts' residence. Another party, and each had come alone and arrived simultaneously. Jeanette again was ringing the doorbell. As they entered, their hostess remarked, "So nice of you to have come together." Jeanette and Gene looked at each other in amazement and exclaimed, "But we didn't," and laughed. Next time was at a preview. They met at the ticket office. A camera man thought that they were together, snapped their picture and the next day the papers announced a new romance.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

NOTES on a great public career are preserved for posterity in the scholarly pages of the *Daily Illini*:

Charles Roger Evans, ex-congressman from Nevada, has come back to Congress. But instead of occupying a seat on the floor of the House, as he did from 1919 to 1921, he leads flocks of sightseers into the gallery. Evans' new role is that of a Capitol guide.

In the 14 years between his two "terms" in the Capitol, Evans has run a copper mine, sold cars in Chicago, driven trotting and pacing horses in "the grand circuit" out West, and managed a series of gambling houses in Elko, Nevada. He says that the job of Capitol guide is just a stepping stone to getting back to a seat in Congress.

GEORGIA

REMARKABLE discovery made in a report by a jobholder on the Federal Writers' Project in the Cracker State:

Bison, elk, and puma are now extinct in the city of Macon.

KANSAS

POETIC but direful suggestion from the editor of the *Wyandotte Echo* to up-and-coming New Dealers:

On! On to the stretches of golden grain. The fields are yellow and harvests waiting. Why tarry amid the scanty "flesh pots" of PWA or WPA, while the harvest calls you with good grub and pay. *Of course, you will have to work.*

MARYLAND FREE STATE

HIGH society doings in Baltimore, as fulsomely recorded by the society editor of the *Afro-American*:

In vague re the festive calendarings which have been as vaguely compiled for the holidaying horde now closed in upon us: The roster of matrons who afforded us that gosh-all-put-out grand time yesterday morn at the Colonnade, really outdid themselves as dilettantes, what?

They're due columnar accolade. . . . For, verily, we did swing and sip and sway almost till end of day! Later, a selected safari trekked up the rialto to the intimate, crowded, noisy and Susi-Quish afternoon encampment of the Ax-Grinders which was vclept "a cocktail hour reunion".

MICHIGAN

A SPORTING medico issues a solemn warning to his patients in the columns of the Tecumseh *Herald*:

NOTICE

My office will be closed from Friday until about the 29th of November. Sitting on a deer run. P. B. Hardy, M.D.

NEW JERSEY

FUTURE All-Americans are hymned by an impassioned football fan in the pages of the scholarly Passaic *Herald-News*:

Praise be to the football team of Garfield High!

7 games were won, 2 were lost and one was a tie.

The record is a proud one, we all know,

It was gained by fighting fairly with the foe.

Art Argauer, our Coach is the man Who has coached them better than any man can.

He taught them the game, regulations, and rules,

And gave us a County Champ—Captain Jules!

Known to many as Koshlap, he led the team

Making many Garfield fans' faces beam.

Then Swartzinger with his wonderful booting toe

Many a time made the ball soar and over go!

Sully, Banas, Herk and such, All aid with a definite touch.

Galler, Babula and Eddie Zavada

Start us going with G. H. S. Alma Mater!

Kappy, Szely, Macurak, Szot and Zak,

Give us the spirit that SOME other
teams lack.

The Zecker boys so brave and bold
Help to protect the Purple and Gold!
Perry, Copello and Bonk also rate
In conquering the foe without hate.
Geresi, Rotola, Pirog and Joe Wia-
trak

Bazarnicki, Jupin, Kopec and Shu-
pack

Ciesla, Young, and Grembowitz's
praises never die

In paying tribute to dear old Garfield
High!

NEW YORK

THE Comrade movie critic of *Fight*
uncovers a diabolic Fascist con-
spiracy on the part of Warner
Brothers' studio:

"The Charge of the Light Brigade"—
An heroic, epic, panoramic transcrip-
tion of the most senseless military
maneuver in history. *Dangerous be-
cause of its pictorial thrills.*

ONE of the Republic's leading
Men of Letters chucks aside the
dignified robes of his profession
and scampers out after the ma-
zuma. The following, mimeo-
graphed on the Master's personal
stationery, was received by many
surprised Babbitts just before
Christmas:

ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT

10 Gracie Square
New York

My dear Mr. Blank:

If you are planning to give me a

present this Christmas, I beg of you
NOT to make it something indestruct-
ible which would only add to the
litter of my life. Eventually, I would
shove it up in the attic and then be
haunted every time you came to call
for fear you'd notice it was nowhere
around. Such a gift is dictated by the
kind of vanity which makes some men
stipulate in their wills just what kind
of marble horror is to keep their
memory green. The gracious and truly
modest gift is always something per-
ishable—a song under the window,
flowers for the living room, or, better
still, something to drink. Best of all,
something to drink. Don't give your
friend something to put in the attic.
For sweet charity's sake, give him
something to put in the cellar.

The safest bet is whisky, and you
could hardly do better than Sea-
gram's Pedigree, that rare, eight-year-
old Imported Bonded whisky, of
which Seagram's, and with good
reason, are so proud.

But why, as they say in the drama,
am I telling all this to you? Well, it's
because the Seagram people have se-
duced, bribed, and corrupted me into
doing so. Besides, it happens to be
true.

Here's hoping,

A. WOOLLCOTT.

P. S. If you're as lazy as I am, you'll
probably use the special service the
card tells you about. If not, you'll
waddle into a store and help yourself.
A. W.

THE philosophy of the More
Abundant Life is neatly summed
up by an alien, arrested in Harlem
for leading a Relief demonstration:

I don't want to be an American citi-
zen, you don't get enough Relief.

THE STATE OF THE UNION

By ALBERT JAY NOCK

The Bogus Era of Good Feeling

IT APPEARS that a good many editorial post-mortems on the election are advising American business to let bygones be bygones and go in with Dr. Roosevelt's government for an Era of Good Feeling. Some of our leading men of business also are recommending this course. It seems the worst possible advice. Make-believe good feeling is as useless as it is dishonest, and an era of sincere good feeling can not be handed off a shelf ready-made, nor can it be improvised out of any old shoddy stuff that happens to be at hand. Good feeling has to be earned; and where government is concerned, it should always be up to the government to do all the earning, and to do it good and hard.

What really lies behind the advice that these newspapers are handing out is of course the fact that American business has always been run on an opportunist policy. If it met an opponent who was too strong to be disregarded or sandbagged, it played ball with him for a while until it got him. The great

new Era of Good Feeling therefore means merely a continuation of this back-number policy. That is the long and short of it, as the newspapers and business both know well enough; Mr. Rockefeller's benighted letter to Mr. Farley reeks with the musk-and-patchouli stench of opportunism. This policy, however, will not work any longer, for too many people are "onto" it, and their confidence is too scary. It will work for a while, but a short while, and then it will blow up in a tremendous bust, followed by State intervention of a much more severe type than was fastened on us by the last bust, eight years ago.

We see, then, what we may expect if the newspapers and the old-line Bourbon type of businessman have their pernicious way at the present juncture. Somewhere, however, there should be businessmen with sense enough to know that good feeling between a people—any people—and their government is as impracticable as between a traveler and a footpad. A knight

of the road will go good as long as he is kept aware that the traveler has the drop on him, but no longer. If the traveler lets himself be blarneyed out of his vigilance for a moment, then so much the worse for the traveler. On this eminently sound and safe principle, therefore, any era of good feeling between government and people under any circumstances is a most alarming symptom; it means that with the people off their guard, their attention distracted, the government is on the point of making hay of their rights, liberties, and property. That is what happened after the era of good feeling in the 'Nineties, and it will happen again.

A hundred times I have quoted Mr. Jefferson's saying — and I hope I can live to quote it a thousand times — that "the spirit of resistance to government is so valuable on certain occasions that I wish it always to be kept alive. It will often be exercised when wrong, but better so than not to be exercised at all". Let us be explicit about this spirit. What is it, and what is the normal attitude that it should induce in a people towards their government? Why is it so valuable that even a wrong exercise of it, though occurring often, should be tolerated as the lesser of two evils?

In general, as I take it, the wise old man meant that a half-way decent society, the kind of society that he wished to see established in America, should have exactly the spirit of the Southern Irishman who came ashore from a shipwreck, crying, "What's the government iv this counthry, fr I'm agin it?" It should regard government, wherever found, as an alien and an enemy; as Mr. H. L. Mencken calls it, "the common enemy of all well-disposed, industrious, and decent men". As such, government should be watched with unceasing vigilance, and with unceasing readiness to meet the first sign of misdoing with loud and strong remonstrance as a curtain-raiser for rebellion, if the warning goes unheeded. "I like a little rebellion now and then," Mr. Jefferson wrote Mrs. John Adams. Even when rebellion was not strictly justifiable, he was for it in a general way, as he wrote W. S. Smith: "The people cannot be all and always well-informed. The part which is wrong will be discontented in proportion to the importance of the facts which they misconceive. If they remain quiet under such misconceptions, it is a lethargy, the forerunner of death to the public liberty." There is a statement worth being pondered upon by those who are

now pushing for a hand-me-down Era of Good Feeling.

In particular, it follows, I think, that in Mr. Jefferson's kind of society, the individual citizen should regard the persons who administer the government as *ipso facto* potential rogues, who may be estopped from active roguery only by the watchful eye and ready hand of an invincibly suspicious and captious citizenry. He believes that if this watchfulness and readiness be relaxed for a moment, these persons, as Mr. Jefferson said, "shall all become wolves". Thus where public officials are concerned, the burden of proof should always be on the defendant. The presumption of misconduct should be upon him continuously until he proves himself innocent. If he does so prove himself, he may be dismissed at the end of his term with a "character" such as an employer gives an honest and satisfactory servant who is leaving his employ. If not, the force of a militant public opinion should drum him out at once.

If this interprets Mr. Jefferson's idea of patriotic spirit correctly, as I believe it does, we may quickly see how mischievous and vicious are those advisers who, at such a time as this, take it upon themselves to address the businessman in the accents of a public relations

counsel or a cruise director at a get-together dinner. With 17,000,000 of our electorate having no representation whatever in the government, with no official opposition or check upon our jobholders, with the principle of absolutism already foisted into the Constitution by the income-tax amendment, under which the State may at its pleasure confiscate everyone's last penny — what kind of time is this to be maundering about an Era of Good Feeling? Such talk is no more or less than treasonable — not legally so, I know, but actually so — and toleration of it bears the mark of a porcine "lethargy, the forerunner of death to the public liberty".

If there were ever a juncture in public affairs where scrutiny of official doings should be closest, where criticism should be quickest and most uncompromising, where "the spirit of resistance to government" should flame brightest, that juncture is now. Never mind about any new political nostrums or any change of impostors in office. The government that has to be dealt with is the one in front of us, and not some dream of Fascism, Communism, or what-not; and if a patriotic citizenry watches its jobholders like a hawk and whoops up the battle cry of freedom at the first show of their misfeasances, it

will have no time to fiddle around with any new systems or politico-economic patent medicines, and it will be doing a much better job.

Indeed, what else is left for our seventeen million disaffected voters to do? Politically, they are as helpless a minority as one of Hitler's minorities over in Germany. They have no more official representation than if they had all been disfranchised six months ago. The important thing now is how these people think. How they voted does not matter, for it is always how people think that counts, never how they vote. Well, if this large helpless minority are thinking at all, how are they to give any effect to their sentiments, unless by taking up the Jeffersonian conception of public duty? What else can they do?

It seems likewise that the businessman would be much better advised to take up this Jeffersonian conception than to demean himself by cringing to the suggestion of an Era of Good Feeling. I am well aware that he is on an uncomfortably hot spot. The fact that he is there by his own fault is not to the point; however he got there, there he is. The government has him pretty well where it wants him, and can make things most unpleasant for him if it chooses.

There are two things, however, that he can do, and it would be greatly to his credit and his ultimate profit if, rather than let himself be dragooned into the trap of a decoy Era of Good Feeling, he set about doing them at once.

First, he can make known through his organizations that he will meet the government's exactions, inquisitions, regulations, supervisions, only under duress; that he will make no advances towards the government and no profession of friendliness; he will obey its orders, but nothing more. He will also make it abundantly clear that he does this only because, when the evil consequences of all these interventions become apparent, it will be seen that the responsibility for those evils rests wholly on the government, and not on him.

The second thing he can do is to revise radically his ideas of publicity and propaganda. Hitherto he has placed his reliance exclusively on *ex parte* publicity, and on propaganda of the Liberty League type. One might suppose that the last campaign has shown him that this sort of thing is played out. I hope it has. It seems certain that from now on, effective criticism of public affairs must have a respectable intellectual content; something which it has not had for almost

half a century. To say, for example, that social security is a bad thing because it is backed by Dr. Roosevelt, who is a crook and a liar and probably a Fascist in disguise, will get nowhere, and it deserves to get nowhere even if its truth were certified beyond question, because it is not intellectually respectable; and there are so many respectable arguments available that it is simply silly to employ one that is not. The thing is, to get down to the principles on which the whole doctrine of this particular intervention rests,

and discuss them *as principles*. The same is true of the tariff, of credit, of unemployment, and the "Labor problem", and of all public questions. There are great principles underlying them, and the thing is to drag those principles out into the light of publicity and thoroughly thresh them over, in order to see where we actually stand.

These two courses of conduct are quite within the businessman's power, and I repeat with emphasis that he will be well advised if he adopts them.



MURDERER'S SONG

BY ELISABETH G. VAN TINE

SOMEbody will discover me
Before this slow day flickers out
And hang me from the highest tree.
I killed belief. I upheld doubt.

The sun looks with reproachful eyes,
Piercing my being through and through;
And when I bend before the skies
The grass refuses me the dew.

O, could I but raise up in pride
The beautiful, young dead,
And, throwing truth lightly aside,
Take back the words I said!

THE BOOK PREVIEW

In this department THE MERCURY presents each month an advance excerpt from an important forthcoming book.

TWENTY GRAND APIECE

From Thieves Like Us, to be published this month by Stokes.

BY EDWARD ANDERSON

THERE was no doubt about it this time: over yonder behind the rise of scrub-oak, the automobile had left the highway and was laboring in low gear over the rutted road to where they waited. Like a saliva-wetted finger scorching across a hot iron, Bowie's insides spitted. He looked at Chicamaw.

Chicamaw's eyes were fixed up the weed-grown road, his thick-soled, convict shoes quiet on the rain-sprinkled earth that he had scarred with pacing. "That's him," he said.

Bowie looked behind him, across the creek's ridge of trees and over the field where the blades of the young corn glimmered like knives in the late-afternoon sun. Above the whitewashed walls of Alcatona Penitentiary reared the red-painted water-tank, the big cottonwood tree of the Upper Yard, and the guards' towers.

The car was coming on. The jew's-harp twanging of the grasshoppers in the broomweeds seemed to heighten. I can rib myself up to do anything, Bowie thought. Anything. Every day in that place over there is wasted.

The car's springs creaked nearer. Bowie looked at Chicamaw again. "You're not planning on going some place, are you?"

Chicamaw did not move his head. "I'm just waitin' to see a horse about a feller," he said.

The taxicab bumped around the hill and wallowed toward them. Bowie squinted to see better. The figure in the back seat had on a straw hat. It was old T-Dub though. Come on, you cotton-head old soldier! The driver was that Kid that had been peddling marihuana to some of the boys. Jasbo they called him.

The cab stopped and Bowie and Chicamaw moved toward it.

"Hello, Bowie," Jasbo said.

Bowie did not look at him. "Hi," he said.

T-Dub sat there with a big paper-wrapped bundle across his knees. The yellow brightness of the new hat made his blond hair look like dry cornsilk.

"Well, what we waitin' on?" Chicamaw said. He opened the door.

T-Dub handed Chicamaw the bundle and then reached inside his blouse and pulled the gun. He scraped the barrel against the driver's cheek. "This is a stick-up, Jasbo," he said.

"Godamighty, Man," Jasbo said. His head quivered on a rigid neck.

Chicamaw ripped at the bundle strings and slapped at the paper. It contained blue denim overalls and white cotton shirts. He began stripping himself of his cotton-sacking prison clothing. Bowie and T-Dub began changing too.

Jasbo said: "Bowie, you know me. You tell these boys I'm all right."

"You just do what you're told," Bowie said.

"All you gotta do is tell me," Jasbo said.

Their clothing changed, Chicamaw pushed Jasbo over and got under the wheel and Bowie and T-Dub got in the back. They turned and went back up the road. On the highway, the wind began beating the speeding car like a hundred fly-swatters.

There was a car under the shed of the filling station on the right. A man in coveralls stood beside the red pump twisting the handle.

"Don't you let me see you throwing no winks, Jasbo," T-Dub said, "or I'll beat your ears down."

"I'll put my head 'tween my legs if you say so," Jasbo said.

They passed the filling station and Bowie looked back. The man was still twisting the pump handle. The empty highway behind looked like a stretching rubber band.

Bowie looked at the revolver in T-Dub's thick grasp. It was a silver-plated gun with a pearl handle. This old soldier knows what he is doing, Bowie thought. "Any rumbles in town?" he said. T-Dub shook his head.

The highway still stretched empty. They're finding out things back there now in the Warden's Office, Bowie thought. The Colonel's bowels are gettin' in an uproar now. Get out the stripes for that bunch of no-goods, he is saying. That's what you get for treatin' them like white men. No more baseball and passes to go fishing for that Bowie Bowers and Elmo Mobley. That T. W. Masefeld is not going to work in this prison commissary any more. Get out the dogs and the shotguns and the .30-30's and run them sons of bitches down. . . .

A car shot up over the rise ahead, hurtled toward them. It passed with a

swooshing sound. Cars coming this way don't mean nothing, Bowie thought. No more than them crows flying over yonder. T-Dub shifted the revolver to his left hand, wiped his palm on his thigh, and regrasped the gun. Old T-Dub knows what he is doing.

The tendons of Chicamaw's lean neck played into two bony knots behind each ear. That Chicamaw knows what he is doing too. A man won't get in with two boys like this just every day. No more Time for any of them. They had shook on it.

The explosion was like the highway had snapped. The escaping air of the right back tire wailed. They bumped across the wooden bridge and moved up the dirt side-road. When they were out of sight of the highway, Chicamaw stopped. The casing looked like it had been chopped with an ax. The spare was no good either.

Dusk was smoking out the ebbing glow on the horizon. Crickets in the roadside grass sounded like wind in loose telephone wires. Hundred and twenty-two miles to Keota and Chicamaw's cousin, Dee Mobley and our Hole.

Chicamaw yanked at the barbed wire of the fence with the pliers and then came back with a strand. He lashed Jasbo to the steering wheel. They moved now across the field of growing cotton toward the farmhouse light. "This gentleman up here might have a car with some tires on it," T-Dub said.

The earth of the field was soft and the tough stalks whipped their legs. In the distance, back toward the Prison, there was the sound of baying dogs and Bowie stopped. "Man, listen to them dogs," he said. Chicamaw and T-Dub halted. It was a vibrant, sonorous sound like the musical notes of a deep reed instrument.

"Hell, them's possum hounds," Chicamaw said.

They walked faster. The cottonwood stumps squatted in the field like headless toads. The farmhouse light glowed nearer, a fierce orange. T-Dub broke into a lope and Chicamaw and Bowie followed.

The woman with the baby in her arms led T-Dub and Bowie back to the lamp-lighted kitchen and the little man at the table half turned in his chair, a raw, bitten onion in his left hand, and looked up at them, at the gun in T-Dub's hand.

"We need that car out there of yours, Mister," T-Dub said. "Come on up."

Little Man turned and put the onion on the table. There were fried eggs and yellow cornbread on the plate. He got up and pushed the chair against the table. "Where's them keys, Mama?" he said.

The skin about Mama's mouth was twitching and her lower lip looked

like it was going to melt on her chin. "I don't know," she said. The baby in her arms began to whimper. Little Man found the keys in his pocket.

T-Dub looked at Mama. "Lady, if you like this gentleman here and want to see him again and I think you do, you just don't open your mouth after we leave."

"Yessir," Mama said. She began jogging the baby up and down. It began to cry.

Dust was as thick as silk on the car's body and there were chicken droppings on the hood and fenders. Little Man got in front with Chicamaw. "I haven't had this car out in more than a month," he said.

The highway paralleled the high embankment of the Katy railroad now. Bowie watched the rising speedometer needle: *forty-five . . . fifty*. Stomp it, Chicamaw. Two pairs of nines riding our backs now. That kid Jasbo is squawking back yonder now all over the country. Ninety-nine years for highway robbery. Another pair for kidnaping.

The lights of the little highway town ahead spread with their approach and then scattered like flushed prey as they entered its limits. Under the filling-station sheds, swirling insects clouded the naked bulbs. The stores were closed; the depot dark. No Laws jumping us here, Bowie thought. No Square-Johns with shotguns. He turned toward T-Dub. "How many miles you think we done?"

"Twenty," T-Dub said.

"My woman has been pretty sick," Little Man said. "Been awful torn up lately."

Chicamaw's head went up and down.

Awful sick or scared, Bowie thought. District 'Cuter shouting that all over the Courthouse won't sound so good, boys. Stomp it, Chicamaw. Fog right up this line. Hour and forty minutes like this and we'll be cooling off with Real People. That Dee Mobley was Real People. Him and Chicamaw had thieved together when they were kids. Chicamaw had been saving this Hole for eight years.

"Hasn't been well since the baby," Little Man said.

The motor coughed, spluttered. Chicamaw yanked out the choke button. The motor fired again, missed; the cylinders pumped with furious emptiness. Loose lugs rasped on the slowing wheels.

"Get her off the highway," T-Dub said. "Goose her. Gentlemen, this wins the fur-lined bathtub."

Bowie, T-Dub, and Little Man pushed, their feet clapping on the pavement like horses. At last they reached the crossroads and they pushed the car up over the hump and out of sight of the highway. Chicamaw started tying

Little Man. T-Dub breathed like he had asthma. "I've had plenty of tough teaty in my day, but this is the toughest. I might as well turn this .38 on me and do it up right."

A car was coming; its headlights glowed above the hump. It sped on, its sound diminishing like the roll of a muffled drum.

"Let's get moving," Chicamaw said.

They crossed the highway, crawled through the fence, and waded the hip-deep grass of the railroad right-of-way. They climbed the embankment and got down on the railroad bed.

"We could flag a car and throw down on them?" Chicamaw said.

"To hell with them hot cars," T-Dub said. "I'll walk it."

"We can do it by just keeping right down these ties," Chicamaw said.

"Like goddamned hoboos," T-Dub said.

The moon hung in the heavens like a shred of fingernail. There was only the sound of their feet crunching in the gravel. Chicamaw led.

The nail in the heel of Bowie's right shoe was digging now into the flesh. To hell with it, he thought. Bad start is a good ending, boys. You can't throw snake-eyes all day. Box-cars won't jump up in your face every throw. There's a natural for us up this road.

II

That rain-blurred sprinkle of lights yonder was Keota. Before the rain commenced, Bowie had heard sounds of the town, but now there was only the smacking of the wind-driven rain against the shocks of old wheat around him and its clatter on the stubbled earth. He had been alone now more than two hours and it must be getting along toward three or four o'clock. In the black depths underneath those lights yonder, T-Dub and Chicamaw were looking for Dee Mobley's place. When they found Chicamaw's cousin, they were coming back after him. Three flashes of the headlamps, if they got Dee's car, would be the signal.

Bowie reached down now and pressed his numb feet. They felt like stumps. A man on stumps couldn't do much good if he was jumped and that is why he had stayed here to wait.

The thunder in the east rumbled nearer and then cracked above him in a jagged prong of lightning. The flash bared the sodden stretch to the sagging fence and road. I won't be hearing any more from my people, Bowie thought. Mama. Aunt Pearl. Cousin Tom. Goodbye to you people. The first thing the Law does is look up the people a man has been writing to and watch them places.

Approaching car lights bobbed on the road and Bowie got up. The laboring machine plowed the mud of the road right on past. Bowie lowered himself back to the ground.

Them boys will be back here. Takes time to locate a man when you don't know where he lives. Let him stay out here? Them boys weren't made that way. It was getting doggone late though. There wasn't a dozen lights in the town now.

Lightning slashed the swirling heavens. Another car was coming. It sounded like a Model T; had one twitching feeble light. Bowie moved toward the fence in a half crouch. The car was a Ford pick-up, its body boards rattling. That light on it was either just going off and on, or signaling. What was it doing? He checked the shout in his throat. The car went on, the sound of its straining motor dying in the night.

He sat now at the side of the road. It couldn't be very long until daybreak. Well, I can't sit out here up into the day. Them boys must have got a rumble over there. They might be in trouble this very minute. They wouldn't leave me out here though. Not them boys. We've had our heads together too long on this business. Take old T-Dub. Him knocking down in that Commissary every day so they would have a stake. A man didn't start out with money that come that hard with two fellows and not intend to go through with it. Not any four hundred and twenty-five dollars. And planning as far ahead as they had? Cooling off at Dee's and then going on down into Texas and Holing up in a house in that little town of Zelton? Nosir, that boy just wasn't made that way. And Chicamaw? Them white teeth.

The rain slapped his face and crawled on his numb feet. But I can't stay out here forever. If they ain't here by daybreak, I've just got to go in. I can't help it. I'm going in.

In the center of the Square was the Courthouse, a two-story sandstone building with big basement signs: *Whites . . . Colored*. One- and two-story buildings fenced the Square: *Greenberg's Dry Goods Store . . . Keota State Bank . . . Rexall Drug Store . . . Hamburger's 5 ¢ & 10 ¢*.

The rain had stopped and the sun looked like a circle of wet, yellow paper. Bowie walked across the Courthouse lawn toward the dry goods store on the corner. The clerk leaned against the doorway with his arms folded across his chest and when Bowie neared he pushed with his shoulder blades and stood erect. "Yessir?" he said.

"I got ten bucks, Pardner," Bowie said, "and I got to have a pair of pants and a shirt and socks and shoes and some short-handled drawers."

"We'll see," Pardner said.

Bowie followed him back into the gloom and deeper into the smell of damp wool and bolted goods and floor sweep. Pardner turned on a fly-specked bulb above a table of khaki work pants.

In dry clothing now, Bowie sat on a bench while Pardner laced the new shoes on his feet. "You don't know a feller around here by the name of Tobey or Mobby or something like that, do you?" he asked. "He was working in a filling station up in Tulsy."

"There's a fellow named Mobley out on the Dallas highway that's got a little store and station out there."

"It wasn't Mobley, I'm sure of that. But it don't matter."

The new shoes made his feet feel like they were not even sore. It was good to walk. The sun was blotting the puddles and making the dry stretches of the highway glare. He passed the lumber yard with its fence of shredded show posters, the closed cotton gin, the tourist camp: *Kozy Komfort Kamp*.

That was the place yonder all right. That station right yonder with the orange-colored pump. A man sat under the shed in a tilted chair. Back of the station was a smokehouse-looking structure and then woods. Farther up the highway, on the left side, was another station. Bowie went up under the shed toward the man in the tilted chair. "How you do, Friend?" Bowie said.

"Howdy," the man said. He had a heavy face, rough as oak bark and long, black sideburns touched with wiry gray. The black cotton shirt had white buttons.

"You're Dee Mobley, aren't you?" Bowie said.

"That's me."

"You haven't had a couple of visitors lately?"

Mobley looked at Bowie's shoes. "You got on some new shoes there, haven't you? Feet been hurting?"

"You doggone whistling. I just got these up town."

"New pants too?"

Bowie grinned.

"Where in the hell," Mobley said, "have you been?"

"Waiting for that Chicamaw and that T-Dub Masefeld."

"I went after you last night myself," Mobley said. "Raining cats and nigger babies."

"In a Model-T truck?"

"That was me."

"Well, I'll be — Can you beat that? And I just sat out there and let you go by."

Mobley made a thumbing motion toward the filling station up the highway. Two figures in uniform coveralls sat on a bench under its shed. "Them

Square-Johns up yonder are always big-eyeing this way so you just go on past like you were hitch-hiking and then cut back through the woods. The boys are in that bunk of mine right back of this place."

Bowie dog-trotted through the woods toward the filling station. He could see the place that Dee called his Bunk. It had a corrugated iron roof and the limbs of a big pecan tree shaded it. He crawled through the fence and went to the Bunk's door and knocked. The springs of a bed inside creaked a little. He knocked again. There was no answer. "Chicamaw," he called.

Feet thumped on the floor inside, stomped toward the door. T-Dub's face was framed in the parted door. "For Christ's sake, come in," he said.

Chicamaw lay on the iron bed in his underwear. "We thought maybe you had gone back to Alky."

"I just been swimming, that's all," Bowie said. "And thinking I was a lone wolf."

T-Dub pointed at the bare wooden table. On it was a bowl of pork and beans, a hunk of yellow cheese, and a broken loaf of bread. "You want to glom?"

"Man, I'll say."

"We didn't get holed up here until five o'clock this morning," Chicamaw said. "I was going to go back after you tonight. I don't see how Dee missed you."

"It was my fault," Bowie said. He poured beans on a hunk of the bread and pressed it into a sandwich. He took a bite and chewed and grinned.

III

Up until a year ago, Dee Mobley had been bootlegging corn whiskey, but the new Sheriff in Keota had it in for him, he said. He squatted now against the wall of the Bunk, his breath as strong as rubbing-alcohol fumes, a finger-rolled cigarette wagging on his lower lip. The afternoon sun was packing heat into the low-ceilinged, crowded room. Chicamaw sat on an upturned bucket filing on the barrels of the 12-gauge shotgun with a hack saw. Bowie lay on the bed, a wet towel across his face.

T-Dub counted out three hundred and twenty-five dollars and gave it to Dee. This was to buy a second-hand car in Tulsa, cover ten dollars for the shotgun and twenty-five for Dee's trouble.

"I might be able to make it back by tomorrow night," Dee said. "But if I see I'm going to get in here after daylight I'll just wait until the next night."

"We'd like to shell out of here about eight o'clock at night," T-Dub said.

"We don't forget our friends, Dee," Chicamaw said. "You do the best you

can for us and when we get in some real money, you'll see a piece of it."

After Dee left, T-Dub said they had ninety-five dollars left. It had to take them to Texas.

Chicamaw put the shotgun down and went over and picked up a road map on the bed. T-Dub said the best way to leave a Hole was early in the evening when the traffic was heaviest. Stay off the main highways as much as you could and follow timbered country. Keep a couple of five-gallon cans filled with gasoline and circle cities like Dallas and Fort Worth where the Laws had them scout cars and radios, until you got to Zelton.

"I can run these roads all day and night through," T-Dub said. "Just keep your car clean and not let it look like it was being run hard and everybody stay shaved up and looking like you were just a fellow about town."

"Just give me one man driving and me sitting in the back with a .30-30 and I can hold off any carload of Laws that ever took out after anybody," Chicamaw said.

"Man, looker here," T-Dub said. He had the Oklahoma City newspaper spread out on the bed and was tapping the left top column. "Just looker here." Bowie went over and he and Chicamaw looked:

ALCATONA, Okla., Sept. 15 — The escape of three life-term prisoners who kidnaped a taxicab driver and a farmer in their desperate flight was announced here tonight by Warden Everett Gaylord of the State Penitentiary. Combined forces of prison, county, and city officers were looking for the trio. The fugitives are:

Elmo (Three-Toed) Mobley, 35, bank robbery; T. W. (Tommy Gun) Masefeld, 44, bank robbery; and Bowie A. Bowers, 27, murder.

"Pulling that toe stuff again on me," Chicamaw said. "All right, you sons of bitches."

Mobley and Bowers, Warden Gaylord disclosed, took advantage of permits allowing them to go fishing on prison property and Masefeld of a pass to town. All three were privileged trustees.

Jed Miracle, 21, Alcatona taxi driver, was tied in his own taxi which the fugitives abandoned after a tire blew out. E. T. Waters, farmer living at the edge of Akota, twelve miles south of here, gave descriptions of three men who commandeered his car at the point of a gun. After traveling with the trio for more than an hour, the fuel of the car was exhausted and Waters was tied and abandoned in his own car like Miracle.

The desperate trio are believed to be headed for the hills of Eastern Oklahoma where so many criminals have found refuge in the past few years.

Bowers, youngest of the escaped men, was serving a life sentence that had been commuted from the death penalty. He was convicted in the murder of a storekeeper in Selma County when he was 18 years old. The killing took place during an attempted robbery. He was a member of the prison baseball team.

All of the men had good prison records, Warden Gaylord said. Masfeld had charge of the prison commissary, selling cigarettes and candies to the inmates. He had been in the prison six years. Mobley, also a member of the prison ball team, had served five years of a 99-year sentence from Larval County.

Miracle, the cab driver, described tonight how he was lured to the creek a mile from the prison by Masfeld and forced at the point of a gun to surrender his cab and accompany them.

"Masfeld told me in town he wanted to take some sandwiches and soda pop out to some friends of his who were fishing," Miracle declared. "I had done that plenty of times for some of the trusty boys and I did not think anything about it. When we reached the place, Masfeld jabbed the gun in my back and said he would kill me if I did not obey him," Miracle asserted.

"A tire blew out," Miracle went on, "and the extra was down too, so they tied me up and went on across a cotton field toward the highway. I managed to work myself loose and drove the car back to town."

The shouts of Waters, the farmer kidnaped by the men, attracted coon hunters who freed him. He declared the men treated him courteously.

"That toe stuff," Chicamaw said.

"It tickles me," T-Dub said, "about this Tommy Gun they're putting on me. I never did have but one machine gun in my life and I never did even try it out. I'll take an automatic pump-gun any old day."

"It's not a very long piece about us though, is it?" Chicamaw said.

"Brother, I wish it was just two lines," Bowie said.

"Nothing at all you mean," T-Dub said. "Papers can raise more heat than anything. These Laws work like hell to get their names in the papers."

They lolled on the ground in front of the Bunk, unrecognizable bundles in the darkness, only their slapping at mosquitoes interrupting the quiet. This was the second night they had waited on Dee Mobley. The lights of the station had not been turned on this evening. Everything was set to take off. Chicamaw had the shotgun sawed off so he could carry it underneath the old lumberjacket Dee had given him. They had two five-gallon cans of gasoline filled up in front of the station, two sacks of groceries, and three cotton-picking sacks.

"I just hope it's not the car that's holding him up," T-Dub said. "I'll be damned if I start out in a wreck."

"He's probably drinking a little," Chicamaw said.

Bowie got up and stretched. "I wish he had picked some other time to drink if that's it." He walked over to the edge of the tree's inky shadow and stood there, looking at the back of the station. Then he came back and stood above Chicamaw and T-Dub. They were quiet again.

A car was coming around the curve. Suddenly, its lights were flooding the shed under which they sat. No one moved.

It was a coupe and Dee. He got out of the car awkwardly. He was drunk all right. "Hadtufftime," he said.

"You think it's too late to start tonight?" said Bowie.

"Hell, no," Chicamaw said. He and T-Dub began piling things in the car.

"Where's them cotton-picking sacks?" T-Dub said.

"I got them," Bowie said.

"Hadtufftime," Dee said. "Tufftime."

They drove off. Shortly the wind was whipping the sacks on the fenders and insects swirled in the lamp beams and splattered on the windshield.

IV

The two five-gallon cans rattled emptily in the coupe's rear and the red level of the gasoline gauge was below the half mark, but Forth Worth and Dallas were behind now, given the run-around without a rumble. One hundred and forty miles out this straight stretch and they would be in Zelton. Bowie was driving.

The highway turned in a banking curve and then down the highway they could see the scattered lights of a small, sleeping town. "We got to gas up here," Bowie said.

Everything was closed in the town. Small globes burned in the rears of the stores, over the sacks of grain, the cans of oil and tire tubes in the filling stations, and the show-cases in the hardware store.

"Looks like we got to have to wake somebody up," T-Dub said.

"We can just unlatch one ourselves," Chicamaw said.

Bowie drove under the shed of the filling station across the street from the Hardware Store. It was dark under the shed, but in the office a light burned. He got out and went up to the door. On the desk lay a man, suspenders down and his head on a rolled coat. There was an empty scabbard on his left hip.

"Hell, wake him up," Chicamaw said.

Bowie rattled the door and the man stirred, raised up and began to work his mouth like his jaws were sore. That old boy is a Law all right, Bowie thought.

Old Boy came out. He had a pistol in the scabbard now. "What do you boys want?" he said.

"Little gasoline, Pardner," T-Dub said.

Old Boy scratched his head. The hair looked like rope frazzle. "How much?"

"Fill it up," T-Dub said.

Old Boy moved toward the coupe; looked inside of it. T-Dub stepped toward him, brought the barrel of the revolver up into Old Boy's back like he was driving an uppercut. "Unlatch that pump, you nosy old belch, before I beat your ears down good and proper."

Old Boy looked like he was trying to spit acid off the end of his tongue. Chicamaw snatched the six-shooter out of his scabbard. "And do it right now," T-Dub said.

"For God's sakes, boys," Old Boy said. "Take it easy now. I got a wife and four kids, boys. For God's sakes now. I'm an old man."

"You going to unlatch that pump?"

"For God's sakes, boys." Old Boy brought out the rattling ring of keys.

The car was serviced now and T-Dub told Old Boy to get in the car.

"We might just as well unlatch that hardware store over there while we're here and got him," Chicamaw said.

T-Dub drove with Old Boy sitting beside him; Chicamaw and Bowie stood on the running boards. They stopped in front of the Hardware Store.

Chicamaw pried at the door with the tire tool and when the lock burst, it sounded like all four tires on the coupe had blown out. Bowie pushed back the glass door of the gun-case and began piling the weapons in his arms like sticks of wood. Chicamaw was filling a sack with shells and cartridges.

The town was still undisturbed as they left it.

Behind the high signboard, twenty miles from the town, Chicamaw bound Old Boy, pulling his arms behind a post and twisting wire around the thumbs. "You can holler somebody down in the morning," Bowie said.

"That's all right, boys. Perfectly all right. You boys are all right."

The center line of the black asphalt was running under them again like a spout of gray water.

Day began to break with a haze like cigarette smoke in a closed room, and the barbed wire and cedar posts of the fences and the low, twisted mesquite trees began to take form. Bowie rubbed the bristle on his chin. "You know I haven't washed my teeth since we left Alky," he said.

V

They had a furnished house in Zelton now all right, but they were as broke as bums. Yesterday too, T-Dub had almost had a rumble: while he was getting the coupe gassed up, a car of Laws drove right up alongside of him with guns sticking out all over. It just turned out that the Laws were looking for a couple of fellows that had made a Hole in the jail in the next town. Then he draws up at a *Stop* sign and right there, looking him straight in the

face, is a Law he has known since he was a kid. But that Law must not have recognized him.

"I'm just waiting on you two," T-Dub said. "We can sack this Zelton bank tomorrow."

"Call your shot, Bowie," Chicamaw said.

"I'm in," Bowie said. "I'm ready."

"It's settled," T-Dub said.

Chicamaw said some boys liked to rob a bank before it opened and others around ten-thirty in the morning and two o'clock, but any old time suited him. T-Dub said that this bank would be a man-sized job. Four men would be the best number to charge a bank like it. One man holding the car down outside and seeing to it that nobody came out; one holding down the lobby and keeping everybody in, and the other two working the vault and cages and seeing that nobody kicked off any switches.

"Time you split money four ways, though, you haven't got enough to go around," Chicamaw said. "Three is plenty."

"I'm just telling you," T-Dub said. "This won't be the first bank I ever charged."

"I didn't mean anything," Chicamaw said.

"He didn't mean nothing," Bowie said.

"The Outside man has the hardest job," T-Dub said. "Some of these dingbats think the guy in the car has the snap. But he's the man that gets the rumbles first. The Inside is a snap. I never saw a banker yet that wouldn't fork over as soon as you throwed down on him. You can always figure that a man that's got sense enough to work in a bank has sense enough to act like a little man when you throw down on him."

"I've had to high-pressure a few of them," Chicamaw said.

"Only Hoosiers kill," T-Dub said.

"I don't believe you have to kill them," Bowie said.

"Them bankers will tell you to help yourself. It's insured. It's them billionaires up in New York that lose it. Them capitalists."

"I hope this Zelton bank will go for a nice piece," Bowie said.

"I know one thing," Chicamaw said. "I'm going to be wearing me a fifteen-dollar Stetson and a sixty-dollar suit here pretty soon or it might be a black suit with some silk plush around me, but I'm sure not going to be wearing no overalls."

It was six o'clock in the morning and they sat parked in front of the Sears, Roebuck Company store next to the Guaranty State Bank. The empty street looked as wide as a river.

"If Bowie and me are not out of there by nine o'clock," T-Dub said, "you better be coming in after us, Chicamaw." Chicamaw lifted his head in a laughing gesture.

Somewhere the sound of a street-sweeping machine whirled and threshed. Away down the street, in front of the Café, a man came out and got in a car. The slamming door echoed in the canyon of buildings. The car vanished.

"Here it comes, boys," Bowie said. He pointed up the street. A Negro in a gray rope sweater was approaching. Bowie and T-Dub got out of the car and stood beside it. The Negro was a middle-aged man with sideburns like steel wool. He stood there at the bank door, selecting a key on the ring. He inserted the key and grasped the knob.

"We're going in with you, Shine," T-Dub said. Bowie pressed the gun's barrel firmly against the rope sweater and they went into the bank's clean, early-morning gloom. Bowie squatted down and looked under the slit of the drawn blind. Chicamaw was driving off. The Negro breathed like he had been running, his wrists sticking rigidly out of the frayed sweater cuffs. "I doesn't quite understand this," he said.

"Don't bother yourself, Shine," T-Dub said. "You're liable to wake up with somebody patting you in the face with a spade if you do."

Bowie started tying the Negro's thumbs behind him with copper wire. "Mistah, I been porterin' heah fawh twenty yeahs. You can ask anybody in Zelton. Everybody heah knows old Ted. Right heah in this bank fawh twenty yeahs. When they had the old building. Yassah, I been . . ."

"That's enough, Shine," T-Dub said. "Now you'd like to be able to go to church again next Sunday, wouldn't you?"

"Yassah."

"Then you just answer the questions I'm going to ask you."

"Yassah. I never lied to nobody in mah life. You can ask anybody in Zelton about me."

The clock over the front door indicated 6:30. On both sides of the gray tile floor at the front of the bank were brown railings and inside of these were clean desks with lettered stands: *President . . . Vice-President . . . Vice-President . . .* The bronze cages fenced the passageway of glass-topped tables back to the Vault. It was a big, broad door of aluminum and black colors. To the right was a passageway that led to the side door.

"What time does that big vault back there unlatch, Shine?" T-Dub said.

"Cap'n, that something I doesn't know about. Some of the big bosses don't even know that. Mistah Berger knows about it."

"What time does he come down?"

"He's the fust one. Li'l' before eight."

Bowie moved around. Through the slits of the Venetian blind at the side-entrance door he saw the closed, steel doors of the freight depot. An oil truck went past. The clock clicked: 7:00.

More automobiles were sounding on the streets outside now. A switch engine whistled and then the intersection railroad signal began to dong. The exhaust of a bus popped, fluttered. Bowie read the hand-lettered football schedule on the wire stand by the front door.

The knob of the front door turned and a man smelling of hair tonic and shaving lotion came in. He was short and had a belly as round as the sides of a mare in foal.

"Mister Berger?" T-Dub said. He had an open pocket knife in his hand.

The man stood there, his left hand extended in a paralyzed, door-closing movement. His head went up and down.

"Mister Berger, this is a stick-up, and if you want to stay a healthy man, and I think you do, you'll just co-operate."

"I see," Mister Berger said.

It was 7:15.

The heavy doors of the freight depot creaked and groaned in opening. Box-cars bumped in the railroad yards. Automobile horns sounded.

7:45.

Through the blind slots of the side door, Bowie saw the black flannel coat, the silk-clad ankles of a woman. He turned and T-Dub, standing in front of the Vault with Mister Berger and Shine, nodded. Bowie opened the door. The woman gasped like she had been pricked with a pin and Bowie put his hand over her mouth. She became limp in his arms. "Take it easy now, Lady," Bowie said. "Nobody is going to hurt you."

"Be calm, Miss Biggerstaff," Mister Berger said, "these men are not desperadoes."

"I never kill anybody," T-Dub said, "if they just do what I tell them to." 8:30.

Bowie peered through the blind slots. The black V-8 was parked there now, Chicamaw's head down over a spread newspaper on the steering wheel. A match worked in his mouth. That Indian.

Mister Berger and T-Dub were inside the Vault now. A cage door clicked and rattled. Bowie's toes squirmed in his shoes. Sack it, T-Dub. Dump it in. Just a minute, Chicamaw. . . .

Mister Berger came out; then T-Dub with the bulging laundry sack slung across his back.

"Ready?" T-Dub said.

"Ready," Bowie said.

"We're going to take you folks with us," T-Dub said. "There's a Ford just out that door there and you go out there and get in it and don't let me see any of you looking at anybody 'cause if you do you're liable to get somebody killed."

There were two men in striped overalls working on the loading platform across the street, but they did not stop. Mister Berger and Miss Biggerstaff and Shine got in the back; then Bowie. He told Shine to lay on the floor. T-Dub got in front with Chicamaw. They moved off.

The speed indicator rose: past the Candy Factory . . . Produce Company . . . Cotton Compress . . . Nigger Town. . . . A farmer, high up on the cotton wagon, saluted. Chicamaw waved back.

They crossed the railroad tracks and then sped up the straight, dirt road toward the picket of telephone poles that marked the highway. Miss Biggerstaff looked at Bowie. "What are you going to do with us?"

"Don't worry, Lady."

"I have done everything in the world I could, Men," Mister Berger said.

T-Dub turned around. "You folks just sit steady now. You have done all right and everything is okay now."

Bowie could see the grinning lines on Chicamaw's cheek. He smiled too. The speedometer needle vibrated on 80. Miss Biggerstaff shivered as if she were cold.

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When the money was counted and divided, there was twenty-two thousand, six hundred and seventy-five dollars apiece.



THE LIBRARY

How to Be a Diplomat

BY JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

A DIPLOMATIC HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES,
by Samuel Flagg Bemis, \$5.00. *Holt.*

ONCE upon a time, and not so long ago either, the citizens of the North American Union sat serene between their oceans, and bothered very little about the rest of the world. Millions of sturdy taxpayers lived their allotted spans and were gathered to their fathers without ever seeing a Frenchman or a Japanese. Germans, largely represented among the later immigrants, were known to be a simple-minded and worthy lot, fond of beer, music, and flowers. Great Britain provided the American comedy with its most diverting types. Wops and Hunkies occurred in the industrial regions, and stayed there. Russians were a fabulous people, quite beyond the horizons of reality. The great and ancient civilization of China was exemplified by the Cantonese laundrymen, popularly believed to eat rats. Otherwise, there were

Canucks to the north of us, Spigs to the south, and the effete monarchies of Europe stewing in their own regrettable juices on the opposite shores of the Atlantic. Africa and the Transpacific littoral were too far away to think about. The quarrels and problems of these remote branches of the human race affected us not. To be an American Citizen was to be the peer of kings, and our public men reminded us frequently of our favored situation.

It has been the misfortune of the present generation to have such ideas most drastically corrected and revised. The devildoms of science have diminished physical distance; the ramifications of commerce have meshed the antipodes in close coil; the state of Splendid Isolation has fallen off into the past, and become as mythical as the Lost Atlantis.

Twenty-odd years ago, it will be

remembered, a young Serb shot an Archduke in a remote central European garrison town: a place you never heard of. Thereafter, events developed with the dreadful inevitable progression of Aeschylean tragedy. Texas cotton, in a fine crop year, dropped to five cents, and Minnesota wheat to new lows, while half the world locked in battle. Presently tool-manufacturers in Detroit were turning out machine-gun parts instead of chisels, and the furious bayonet in place of the homely screw driver. A little later, shipyard workers in Philadelphia were wearing twenty-dollar silk shirts to their labors; and tall fellows from the Pacific slopes, from the Texas oil fields, and from the New England cloisters were fighting Badenians and East Prussians in woodlots and orchards by the Marne River. Afterwards, an American President sat in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, to be lamentably outsmarted by statesmen known to our democracy as Frogs and Limeys; and that mess will not be tidied up in time to clear the international board for the next major crisis in human affairs.

We have been learning, and learning painfully, that a revolutionary in the Kremlin, with his shirt outside his pants, may make a

dark decision and thereby lop the dividends of the soundest American oil stocks: and that a slant-eyed Oriental general applying the formulae of a German staff officer named Clausewitz to a current situation on the eastern rim of Chahar may do surprising things to the soy-bean industry. While this is writing, I am told that the projection of a red-eyed Fascist *junta* in Santander, last Spring, is quite likely to create a deficiency in the fine olives so essential to the Martini cocktail. In short, there are a lot of other people in the world, and if we don't get along with them, it will make a difference to us.

With these considerations in mind, whether we like them or not, it would be amusing and even instructive if we devoted some thought to the matter of our foreign relations, their background, and the machinery whereby they are maintained. Since any reasonable appraisal of the future lies in the study of the past, I find the researches of Dr. Samuel Flagg Bemis, as set forth in his *Diplomatic History of the United States*, not only timely, but felicitous.

The Americas have been counters in the European diplomatic game since the return of Columbus from his Western voyage. When it

was discovered that precious metals, as well as other articles of trade, were available in paying quantities out there, the interest of the chancelleries in New World affairs became acute, and has continued acute to this day. The kings and their ministers swapped empires they never saw as men swap horses; and rural assassinations on the banks of the Ohio echoed in formal battles beyond the Rhine: Macaulay's immortal passage has in it as much of truth as of rhetoric. Diplomacy, acting through the solvents of trade, dynastic aspiration, and armed force, determined the types and trends of American colonization, and the events that shaped our independence were in no small degree conceived and developed in the European capitals.

Dr. Bemis' narrative proceeds with a discussion of the United States' first important overseas mission: that headed by Benjamin Franklin, who entered the foreign service from the printing business, and was drafted to enlist the French Monarchy in the interest of the rebellious Colonies. The other members of his mission were Arthur Lee and Silas Deane, the latter with a secretary who was thriftily selling the record of the mission's conversations to the British. France, always delighted by a

new thing, had never seen anybody like Poor Richard, whose artless simplicity and engaging manners masked one of the shrewdest and most persuasive intellects of his age. The parlor Pinks of the Louis XVI court were taking up Liberty in a large way, and the French Foreign office, desperately attempting to repair the fatal defeats of the Seven Years' War, lately ended, was headed by the impulsive Vergennes, a stateman ready to try anything. Ministers in Europe had come to such a pass that, in every capital, on all formal occasions, the Ambassador of England preceded the Ambassador of the Most Christian King as a matter of course: a situation unthinkable to the heirs of the Sun King's glories. To discreet representations that England was vulnerable on the American flank, Vergennes lent a receptive ear. The British government, finding matters not going as well as they might against the stout American rebels, and embarrassed by a vociferous Peace Party in the Commons, viewed the French dalliance with alarm, and lost no time in sending over a clever man to open secret negotiations with the Americans. Franklin played the one against the other as skillfully as though he were a belted earl, with four-and-twenty

quarterings and a Downing Street background. He was not long in procuring clandestine support in the way of money and arms, transmitted through the versatile gun-runner Beaumarchais; and in opening the French ports to American trade. Yet the French government remained cautious: they desired some sanction of American success before they committed France to formal recognition; and Franklin did not at any time neglect Wentworth, the British undercover man in Paris. In 1777, the Colonies obliged with a timely and unmistakable military victory: they broke General Burgoyne at Saratoga and captured his army. Lord North's government, much disconcerted, prepared a peace mission, which would offer the Colonies a dominion status. Meanwhile, the excellent Lafayette and other French officers embarked to adventure their swords in the cause of Freedom, and French public opinion, ever volatile, reached hot enthusiasms. Forthwith, Vergennes terminated his watchful waiting, and offered recognition of the new nation. Not merely recognition, now, Franklin could say blandly, having full knowledge of the English overtures: Recognition, a Treaty, and an Alliance! He had all three quickly, for Lord Carlisle

and the English mission were getting ready to sail. The direct results were a sufficiency of ready money; then the French Fleet and Expeditionary Force under de Grasse and Rochambeau; Yorktown; and eventually the United States of America. (Parenthetically, it may be remarked that this idea of Liberty, nurtured and preserved on the other side of the Atlantic by the French monarchy, spread to France, and produced results deplorable for the Bourbon king, and disturbing to all the other kings.) The French assistance Franklin secured was decisive in the American Revolution. We may forget this, the writer remarks; France never will. And Dr. Bemis is at some pains to show that the United States paid the French war loans in full, and with interest. His further chapters indicate Benjamin Franklin's mission in Europe to have been the most brilliantly successful that ever set out from our shores.

Reading the account of the young Republic's hard adventures in the early years, one understands George Washington's sage admonition: that his people avoid foreign entanglements. Here is set forth the course we steered under Washington's firm hand, in the first eight years of the Federal

Union; and the tortoise-like policy of Thomas Jefferson. Here also is the tale of the Louisiana Purchase, not at all edifying; through it Napoleon struck another blow at the English enemy. Here is the slow progress of events that led to the second war with England; and the acts of that Border Captain, Andrew Jackson, in Florida; and in a marshy level downstream from New Orleans on a January morning, when the red coats and white cross-belts of the British line showed hard and sharp against the yellow sedge, over a man's gun-sights: Dr. Bemis does not think — and history is with his opinion — that the Treaty of Ghent would have obtained in all its articles if Pakenham's assault echelons had beaten down that musketry, and set their hands on New Orleans and the Mississippi mouth. There follows the matter of the Barbary Pirates: how it proved cheaper, after much experience, to build a navy than to buy free passage for our ocean trade. And here, finally, are the moves that led to the enunciation of the Monroe Doctrine. This was the diplomacy of the foundation period, and it set the country on its own legs and opened the best third of the North American continent to the colonies on the Atlantic seaboard. We had not

yet reached across to the other ocean, but we no longer faced Eastward towards Europe: our people turned to the West and the South.

From 1823 to the end of the nineteenth century, the country was expanding. Most notable of the expansionists was that same Border Captain, Andrew Jackson, now translated to the White House, and profoundly interested in foreign affairs. He was very largely his own Secretary of State: it is amusing to find, written in the General's hand across the back of a dispatch from his confidential man Butler, in Mexico City, "A Butler. What a scamp!" But the General was not squeamish. He kept alive the boundary question, intermittent with the new Mexican Republic, for two decades: nobody knew just where the Sabine River was, and the best American thought tended to identify it with the line of the Rio Grande-Pecos Rivers. Some future historian, I think, will trace an even closer connection between Andrew Jackson, his friend Sam Houston, and the Texas Revolution. All these fine aspirations flowered in the Mexican War, whereby the Southwestern quadrant of States was added to the Union.

The period of the Civil War gave American Diplomacy opportunity

for a brilliant display of its talents, particularly in England. And yet, this author shows that the military episodes in the war bore decisively on foreign developments, as they always have. If Lee had won a victory at Sharpsburg in 1862; or if, a year later at Gettysburg, on the Third Day, the great column under Pickett had broken the Federal center while Jeb Stuart slashed into the rear echelons of Meade's army, England would almost certainly have recognized Southern independence, and the face of the earth might be different. It is interesting to note, also, that the British neutrality policies which entered powerfully into Anglo-American relations during the World War — particularly those considerations of neutral rights on the high seas and of the Continuous Voyage principle — were formulated and tested by farseeing English statesmen in the 'Sixties. England's diplomacy, like her naval policy, has been ever based on the assumption that she will be a belligerent in any international imbroglio: ours is based on the assumption that we will be neutral. We have had more controversies and disputes with England than with any other power, this author remarks, and since 1815 they have always been arbitrated. We will never fight England again,

unless both of us go mad at once, and that is unlikely.

How we joined in the world race for colonies, in the late 'Nineties — somewhat behind the other international muscle-men, but in time to take the Caribbean basin and important islands in the Pacific — follows in turn: and very pertinent to considerations of today's agenda are the steps of our entry upon the Far Eastern theater: the Open Door (now closed, with a Japanese sentry in front of it); the Boxer business; our altruistic meddling in the affairs of Russia and Japan. The last three hundred pages deal with the World War, and the aftermath of the World War, with particular attention to the naval treaties and the war debts. Dr. Bemis brings these events into perspective and coherence: but he is a wise man, he does not prophesy.

That invaluable publication, *Who's Who in America*, does not indicate that the author ever had a connection with the State Department, or that he has borne arms in any of the combat services. There is no intimation that he holds any brief for armed force. Yet, reading his narrative, certain conclusions are inescapable. One is, that we cannot live to ourselves in the modern world, and that our

agents for external associations have served us well in more cases than not. And the other is, that statecraft and the armed forces—the army and the navy—form a team. The armed forces, employed objectively, are sterile, and breed nothing but destruction. Statecraft, unsupported by any other strength than that of ideas—be the ideas ever so elevated and meritorious—is impotent. Franklin, you observe, had no luck with his French projects until the Continental formations along the upper Hudson overthrew and led into captivity a much respected British General Officer and his people with him. The virtuous indignation of our envoys to the Barbary pirates, and their Christian sentiments, gained no attention until Commodore Preble and his frigates added to forensic argument naval broadsides and landing forces of sailors

and marines. The American riflemen at New Orleans powerfully underwrote the Treaty of Ghent. Our stand in the Venezuelan matter was sound and wise: but it was the Atlantic Fleet that recalled the German Kaiser to his better nature, not that intangible filament we name the Monroe Doctrine. And the state papers of Mr. Woodrow Wilson, as cogent and as closely-reasoned as any in the archives, were, in effect, delivered to the Central Empires by an expeditionary force of two million fighting men.

No one can call the learned Dr. Bemis a militarist. But his lesson is very plain to read. Successful diplomacy and adequate armed force go hand in hand down the corridors of history: and present indications are that their mutual helpfulness will continue for a long time.



THE OPEN FORUM

A COMRADE SQUAWKS—

SIR: In your December issue, Mr. H. L. Varney makes a red herring of Communism and drags it across the trail of the American Civil Liberties Union. His attacks on that organization have the character of broad generalization; he deprecates its essential aims and is specific wherever it fits his anti-Communitistic purpose to be so. It is his right and yours to attack a party or a set of principles, and it is not my intention to criticize any exercise of such rights. But the public is entitled to draw its inference from facts erroneously stated and facts deliberately withheld.

Mr. Varney, according to your account of him (p. 510) is a New York author and editor, and an authority on the Radical movement in America. In *Who's Who* for 1936-37, he claims to be associate editor of *THE MERCURY* "since 1936" (*sic*), an honor that you fail to accord him. That same reference book names him as editor of *The Awakener* (1933-36), a Fascist sheet, and as former managing director of the Italian Historical Society, these posts being testimony to his professional Fascism. He is not an "authority on the Radical movement", he is merely an opponent of it. Mr. Varney's services to Fascism seem to have been worth official recognition, for as long ago as 1932 he became cavalière of the Crown of Italy. His article on the ACLU may be taken as a sign of continued loyalty, for the Union is committed to an unrelenting exposure of Fascist propaganda in America, of which the present article is a cunning specimen. From the Fascist point of view nothing could be more effective than to intimate that the leading association supporting Constitutional rights is camouflage Communism.

The misguided Liberal supporters of the ACLU (representing various creeds, races, colors, and degrees of wealth), whose mind Mr. Varney interprets so indulgently, are content to follow Dr. Ward, their president, and Mr. Baldwin, their director, in the prosecution of the rights of Communists and any other Radicals, and they will desist only when such groups are permitted freely to enjoy their rights under the Constitution.

We pursue our purpose regardless of the views privately held by officers and members, but we have no quarrel with Mr. Baldwin's belief that "the economics of Socialism or Communism, call it what you like, are vastly superior to the economics of predatory capitalism. That's as far as my 'Communism' goes".

B. W. HUEBSCH, *Treasurer*
American Civil Liberties Union
New York City

—AND A CUSTOMER APPLAUDS

SIR: Congratulations on your article "The Civil Liberties Union: Liberalism a la Moscow". It is about time somebody printed the truth about that outfit. They are the champion dissemblers of all time; and the American newspapers have fallen for their propaganda ever since Roger Baldwin bowed down before the Kremlin. I admire *THE MERCURY*'s honest and matter-of-fact exposure of the ACLU's real aims. Please thank Mr. Varney for his service to all non-Soviet Americans. Your magazine is needed today more than ever before—all the others are scared to death of the truth.

JAMES A. MARSHALL

Chicago

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION

SIR: In your December issue you carry a wail from H. L. Mencken under the title, "The Dole for Bogus Farmers". He should be given a nice leather medal as the nation's supreme bellyacher. His whole career indicates that he was an unwelcomed child from conception onward by parents, unloved by playfellows in childhood and youth, and has developed into a life-long congenital scold. There is not one constructive thought in his whole vicious screed. The only things that stand out in crystal-clear silhouette are puerility, gross ignorance, pomposity, and barbed invective. Through its mountainous exaggeration, misinformation, and asininity that sort of sculch carries its own answer. He seems not to find and apparently never has found any human, social, political, or governmental ways or methods that satisfy his fastidious soul. I would suggest that he settle all by his lonesome on some unoccupied South Sea island, where he could manage and boss the whole shebang or go to hell where his kind are unanimous.

H. L. HOPKINS

Clark, S. Dak.

SIR: I wish publicly to thank God for Mr. Henry L. Mencken's article, "The Dole For Bogus Farmers". For two and a half years, I have tried to say (in print) the same things, but could not do so for the reason that I lacked Mr. Mencken's trenchant and masterly command of English. Mr. Mencken has performed a distinct service for the American people and I should like to see his article placed in the hands of every voter and taxpayer. Please understand that since 1908, I have been a consistent Jeffersonian Democrat. But at the recent Presidential election, I stayed away from the polls, rather than sandbag my conscience. More power to Mr. Mencken.

J. CHARLTON SMITH

Greenfield, Ind.

SIR: I enclose a check for a year's subscription to THE MERCURY. As you know, most of the people in this country worship false gods, stuffed shirts with radio personality and the ability to keep the stupid voters filled up with cure-all nostrums and political flapdoodle, so it is very refreshing to read THE MERCURY and know that there are still some unbiased thinkers in this country, unafraid to print the truth. Your editorial, "The Meaning of Violence", Mr. Nock's "The State Can Do No Wrong", and Mr. Mencken's, "The Dole for Bogus Farmers", should be and must be hammered home to every taxpayer. We must find a way to educate the taxpayer to the fact that real prosperity for this country cannot be achieved or long maintained under that kind of a political machine whose first object is to keep itself in power by building up a huge organization of public jobholders and Red-flag wavers. This condition demands more and more of the taxpayers' earnings until the weight of public debt will bankrupt the nation and force the people to make a change in government, even if force is necessary.

I hope that sometime in the near future you can give us a good hot editorial on the Coming Depression, as I am convinced that the next depression will be the crucial point in our credit situation.

W. B. CALKINS

Jacksonville, Fla.

SIR: There is an old but true saying that the man who is quick to call his fellow man a thief is a man to be suspected of thievery. When H. L. Mencken writes such articles as "The Dole for Bogus Farmers", he should be careful, for this might also apply to the man who is quick to call his fellow man an anthropoid. Or is it possible that Brother Mencken has reached the Paleolithic stage and can afford to talk?

BETTY WALTER

Philadelphia

MASTER OF LANGUAGE

SIR: In a recent issue of *THE MERCURY*, in his splendid article "Turgenev, the Beautiful Genius", Mr. Ford Madox Ford said in a footnote: "The true Russians say that Turgenev wrote very badly in Russian."

The true Russians from their childhood were taught that Turgenev was the greatest master of Russian language. From the point of view of style, he wrote better than Count Tolstoy, much better of course than Dostoevsky, in fact better than any other Russian writer. In schools, the excerpts from Turgenev were learned by heart as samples of beautiful prose, and this distinction, aside from him, was given only to Gogol. As far as I know, Turgenev was the only one among great Russian writers who wrote so-called "verses in prose" entirely based on the harmonious constructions of sentences.

What is more, Turgenev had a peculiar fondness for the beauty of his language. Since he knew to perfection several languages, Turgenev apparently realized well that the Russian language in its richness, strength, and beauty had no competitors among other European tongues. And it was Turgenev who said: "In hard moments of doubt about the fate of my country, you alone are my consolation, oh great, powerful, and free Russian language. A great language like this cannot be given to a people that is not great."

I hope, I am even sure, that this notation of Mr. Ford was due to some misunderstanding. Of course what is written and printed stands forever. But perhaps something can be done either by *THE MERCURY* or by Mr. Ford himself — in order to correct this unfortunate impression.

COL. NICHOLAS E. NIEWIADOMSKY
Bronxville, N. Y.

MR. FORD REPLIES

SIR: I never so willingly bowed my head beneath the rod of the corrector. I know hardly any Russian, so on this point I had to accept the views of the very many Rus-

sians (intellectuals) whom I have known in the course of my life. They all, from Stepniak to Prince Kropotkin and Gorki, asserted that Turgenev wrote a French-corrupted Russian that no one should accept as a model. That was—I can now gratefully consider—patriotism of the sort that makes many good Americans assert that Whistler—who was not merely a great painter but one of *the* great painters—couldn't paint. . . . It is exactly thirty years since in this city, in a house just opposite that in which I am writing, I heard Maxim Gorki assert that Turgenev was no Russian and could not write his own language. And that assertion has a little saddened my days ever since—though I don't know why I should mind. But tonight I shall go happier to bed. I was convinced that Turgenev who did everything beautifully *must* have a beautiful sense of his own beautiful language. I waived my conviction before the face of what I took to be Authority. But now it gains immensely since, as the Diarist said, I have found another soul to share it.

FORD MADOX FORD

New York City



CAPITALIST COMRADES

SIR: I note in the *Nation* the following advertisements of vacation resorts:

Zindorest Park—formerly a millionaire's estate. . . .

Arcadia Farms Inn—part of a million-dollar estate. . . .

Davis House—formerly a millionaire's estate. . . .

Does this indicate that the Comrades are beginning to accept the Profit Motive? Or does it merely signify their age-old envy of their betters?

ROSAMOND MERIDETH

Boston

THE FOOTBALL RACKET

SIR: In reading THE MERCURY for November, I find an article written by a certain John R. Tunis, on "More Pay for College Football Stars". I feel sorry for poor John and his amateurish worries. Tell him that when he puts a football star through a university, he'll gladly change his mind. Obviously he has not been to college and certainly he doesn't know much about his amateur article or he would not make such statements regarding certain schools in their classifications. Tell him to seek his publicity by eating nice soft babies and quit worrying.

COL. WAYNE REPLOGLE

Athletic Director

*Elgin Academy
Elgin, Ill.*

SIR: With reference to Mr. Tunis' article on football, it seems to the writer that most of those who condemn high school and college athletics overlook the important fact that in the last twenty-five years, the type of student attending high school and college has very much changed. At the beginning of the century, only one type of student graduated from high schools and later attended college. In intelligence this type probably represented the upper five to ten per cent. The duller types had dropped by the wayside. In the last thirty years our philosophy of education has changed. The new philosophy is that all classes must be educated, the good, bad, and indifferent, even through college. But as all must graduate, there is only one way to accomplish such a task, and that is that many now attend high school and graduate from college that in the old days, to use your Mr. Nock's language, "would not get any closer than the adjacent woodpile".

Since the beginning of this century the meaning of education in a liberal arts college has been so denatured that today all it means for practically all the students is spending four years in college, taking snap courses, belonging to fraternities, and being sure that a label of college graduate is

plastered on the student, so that later in life he can make money or shine socially. To go to college as a means of learning how to live, how better to serve humanity, holds no longer true for the great majority.

Once the college heads make a liberal arts college what it is supposed to be, there will be no trouble about athletics, because then only one type of student will be attending college.

T. W. SERVISS

Tulsa, Okla.

SIR: Regarding several recent opinions submitted by a few of your correspondents relative to the alleged subsidizing of football at various colleges, may I, as a Notre Dame graduate, have the privilege of presenting "the other side" in a succinct manner?

A visiting professor at Notre Dame — a somewhat rabid gridiron fan — once put several questions to the class, of which I was a member, regarding the team's prospects for that year, together with sundry related queries. To which question the class answered in silences. Apparently it was bored. And I shall never forget the words of that professor as they broke the interminable silence: "Gentlemen, for the past six weeks I have been attempting to engage both the students and my fellow-professors of this University in a discussion concerning football. But alas, I acknowledge failure. I must confess that *there is less football spoken per square yard in the University of Notre Dame than in any other school of the country.*"

We just simply played football at Notre Dame and then forgot about it. It was so extra-curricular (notwithstanding the blurbs of the sporting page to the contrary) that not five per cent of the students gave it undue attention. Aside from football's possibilities as a source of revenue for the construction of buildings which might hold the materials that develop culture and facilitate

the advancement of science and philosophy, it was of the most minor importance *per se*.

JOHN F. SULLIVAN, JR.
Notre Dame, '33

Holyoke, Mass.

CONCERNING MR. POLLOCK

SIR: Have been perusing with some degree of interest and some amusement Channing Pollock's leader article in the November *MERCURY*, and which, I believe, fits in with your current policy quite smugly. Mr. Pollock, it seems, believes that America doesn't give a damn and proceeds to get into an indignant sweat about the matter. The moral fiber of the nation, it appears, is rapidly decomposing into the consistency of overripe camembert, which in turn is breeding the pernicious worms of Socialism. Mr. Pollock, I again take the liberty to presume, is a Liberal of the old school who firmly believes in such nefarious barriers to the More Abundant Life as the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the divinely-appointed Supreme Court. The fact that under Il Roosevelt's regime we are seeing the beginning of the end of democratic government as we have known it since 1825 perturbs Mr. Pollock. He fervently hopes that some glorious prophet will arise in all his might and splendor, inspiring and leading the American people back to the same old stand.

Why should the American people give a damn? Did they ever quite believe in either theory or practice the almighty idealism foisted, nay, forced upon them by the Founding Fathers? There has never been a nation of people who in 160 years of being persistently gulled, exploited, cheated, fooled, have gotten so eminently what they deserved. And so, the affable Il Roosevelt, simultaneously greasing the American people and the skids for the decline of democracy, becomes their true and natural prophet. I, for one, welcome the event.

J. A. BABANDO

Los Angeles

SIR: In the November issue of your magazine, you published a communication from David H. Shelling of Brooklyn, in which he denounced *THE MERCURY* as a "Red-baiting, Fascist yellow journal", and used as an example of this catastrophic condition the article from Mr. Pollock's prolific pen, "The Survival of the Unfittest." I, as a hypercritical reader, was highly amused by his choice of adjectives in describing this article — that is, "moronic". That this unenlightened contributor should use the very word with which I would describe his unthinking condemnation of one of the few individuals who have gumption and honesty to face a disastrous situation and bring it out into the open — it was coincidental, to say the least.

Once in a generation a man such as Channing Pollock is thrust upon the horizon with the capabilities to open the minds of an unthinking mass of peasants, and with the ability to present his views in such a manner as to show intelligence and perception, and without the fear and awe of contemporaneous demagogues which is evidenced by each succeeding ballot. In this age of smug self-complacency, so deplorably lacking in roots and decision, a positive mind such as is displayed in the aforementioned thesis and followed by the current "America Doesn't Give a Damn" is a pleasurable variation from the robot-like run of the average indifferent mentality.

Mr. Shelling's attitude toward this type of much-needed frankness seems to be typical of the vast number of people who, too lazy to contribute toward progress, condemn everything and anything progressive as being Communistic, Socialistic, or Radical.

Mr. Pollock, in "America Doesn't Give a Damn", shows remarkable perception of the basic ineptness of the American people. He touches upon the key of the diffidence and complacency of a lazy public. Perhaps an article such as his will do nothing definite toward establishing a more stable or a more satisfying form or conduct of government. But at any rate, Mr. Pollock has made the

effort to think through the conditions around every member of this American democracy. No nation can be built on indifference.

HELEN CHAPIN

Los Angeles



PROLETARIAN PROMENADE

SIR: A recent Soviet statement proclaimed: "Every Soviet girl should have an appearance so attractive that it would be a pleasure to take her out for a walk." Or, to put it another way:

When Economic Man proceeds
To make the world anew,
He jettisons his ancient creeds
And even fails to woo.

He loses taste for female wiles
While liquidating bankers;
For ardent looks or fetching styles
He hardly ever hankers.

The Marxian damsel likewise glows
With social zeal frenetic
Nor agonizes if her nose
Be lacking in cosmetic.

But shibboleths can not gainsay
Man's amorous reflexes,
And nature keeps her charming way
In matters of the sexes.

When Yanovitch has had enough
Ideological abstractions,
He advocates the powder-puff
To renovate his girl's attractions.

He tells her with a scowling air
He won't go walking with a slattern;
The hussy touches up her hair —
And life resumes an ancient pattern.

T. S. LAWSON

Hamilton, N. Y.



THE CHESHIRE CAT

SIR: Pondering the state of the Union, as I do constantly, I decided the other day

to get back to first principles and have a look at the Roosevelt polity in its earliest embryonic form. So I dug up a number of old periodicals, and there it was, with Dr. Roosevelt's grin appearing cheerfully beside it. The sense of it, you will recall, was that he was willing to try anything, so long as it left us in motion rather than standing still. And now, re-reading all this, I had the same feeling about it as I had had when Dr. Roosevelt first promulgated it: a haunting certainty that I had heard it all before, I had no idea where. But the Happy Borrower's grin suddenly gave me a clue, and pulling down *Alice in Wonderland*, I had it, in the scene where Alice talks with the Cheshire Cat, which as you will recall also wore a grin:

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to go," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where—" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

"—So long as I get *somewhere*," Alice added as an explanation.

"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if you only walk long enough."

Rather pleased with the researches, I went over this a couple of times, deciding that it summed up neatly the whole political situation as of the dark days of '33: the country, not caring much where it went, so long as it got *somewhere*; Mr. Roosevelt, perfectly willing to lead it there, providing only it was willing to march.

But then a creepy feeling began to steal over me. It wasn't, I remembered, quite the end of the scene. And so I read on, to the place where the cat began to disappear, "beginning with the tail, and ending with the grin, which remained some time after the rest of it had gone."

Well, I still think it's a pretty good analogy.

GIBSON REYNOLDS TRUSSELL

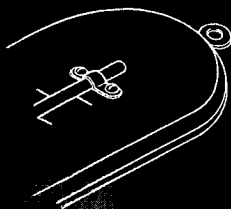
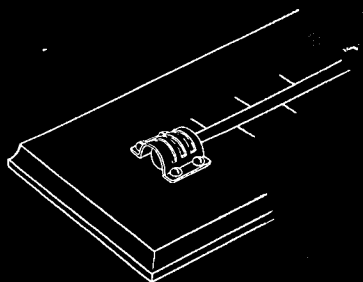
Hollywood, Cal.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

EDWARD ANDERSON (*Twenty Grand Apiece*) is a young free-lance writer who has been successively a trombone player, prize fighter, deck boy on a freighter, and reporter. In 1935 his first book, *Hungry Men* (Doubleday, Doran), shared honors in a prize novel contest. ELIZABETH COATSWORTH (*The Spiders*), author of several volumes of verse, and stories for children, lives in Idleboro, Maine. KENNETH BROWN COLLINGS (*How to Make Flying Safe*) has served as flying instructor, airport manager, and air-mail pilot. He now resides in New York City. HOWARD McKINLEY CORNING (*City Evening After Rain*) lives in Oregon and is the author of two volumes of verse, *These People* (*Humphries*) and *The Mountain in the Sky* (*Vinal*). LAWRENCE DENNIS (*Russia's Private War in Spain*) is an ex-soldier and diplomat who now writes and lectures in this country. His most recent book is *The Coming American Fascism* (Harpers). ALAN DEVOE (*Adventures of a Bookman*), former bookseller, contributes articles and fiction to various periodicals. STEWART H. HOLBROOK (*Oregon's Secret Love Cult*) is an Oregonian whose literary work has appeared frequently in THE MERCURY. DELLA LUTES (*Horse-and-Buggy Days*), a contributor to many magazines, spent her childhood on a farm in Southern Michigan. CHARLES MacARTHUR (*Rope*) is the well-known author, playwright, and motion-picture producer. His story in this issue of THE MERCURY first appeared in *Smart Set* for November, 1923. LOUISE McNEILL (*Character Sketch*) is a young West Virginia poet. H.L. MENCKEN (*The American Future*) is the former editor of THE MERCURY. FLETCHER PRATT (*Crime as a Profession*), New York author, finds time to write frequently for these pages while working on forthcoming books. HENRY F. PRINGLE (*Portrait of Walter Winchell*), winner of the Pulitzer Prize in biography for 1931, is a native New Yorker. ELIZABETH RANDALL (*Clear Day*) makes her home in Albemarle County, Virginia. A. J. RONGY, M.D., (*Abortion: the \$100,000,000 Racket*) is a fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, and author of *Abortion: Legal or Illegal?* (Vanguard Press). ELISABETH G. VAN TINE (*Murderer's Song*) lives on Long Island, writes verse, and is rearing three daughters.

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BY IRVING KOLODIN

*** indicate an outstanding performance,
** a competent performance, * an acceptable performance. ††† denote exceptional recording, †† efficient recording, † poor recording.

ORCHESTRAL

***††† *L'Italiana in Algeri (Overture)*, Rossini: (RCA-Victor, 12-inch record, \$2). A superlative performance by Toscanini and the Philharmonic-Symphony of one of Rossini's most listenable overtures. The music is largely fluff, of course, but it permits an exhibition of Toscanini's most striking qualities as a conductor. Indeed a record for the permanent shelf.

***††† *Danse Macabre, Saint-Saëns*: (RCA-Victor, 12-inch record, \$2). A re-recording by the Philadelphia Orchestra and Stokowski of the work which made phonographic history a decade ago when it was the first example of electrical recording. This new version is almost as great an improvement on its predecessor as that was on acoustical reproduction, but Stokowski is here even more insistent on sensational effects.

***†† *Faust Symphony, Liszt*: (Columbia, seven 12-inch records, \$10.50). The first recording of Liszt's curious, and sometimes amazing reflections on Goethe. Valuable not only for the light it sheds on Wagner's indebtedness to Liszt, but also for the frequent passages of beautiful music it contains. The performance by Selmar Meyrowitz and the *Grand Orchestre Philharmonique* of Paris is altogether competent, if not the most arousing that could be imagined. It is well-recorded, though the studio background is less satisfying to the ear than the depth provided by an auditorium. The choral passage is sung in French.

PIANO

***†† *Islamey (Balakireff)*: (RCA-Victor, 12-inch record, \$2). A superlative performance by Simon Barer of what Liszt called "the most difficult piano work ever written". Barer's performance is remarkable not alone for virtuosity (of which it has all that is required) but for the pianist's excellent taste and musicianship.



RECORDED MUSIC

***††† *La Cathédrale Engloutie* (Debussy): (Columbia, 10-inch record, \$1.25). The pianist is Walter Gieseking, which is all that need be said about a performance of Debussy. His extraordinary success as a recording pianist is demonstrated once again by the tone of this performance. It is regrettable that the piece should be divided by a pause necessary for turning the record, because the mood is thus undeniably shattered.

OPERA

***††† *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Mozart): (RCA-Victor, sixteen 12-inch records, \$33). The first complete opera score by Mozart to be issued for American record collectors. It is sung by the Glyndebourne (England) Festival Company of 1934, under the excellent direction of Fritz Busch. Competence rather than brilliance is characteristic of the singing, but Busch provides a momentum to the performance which is altogether attractive.

DANCE

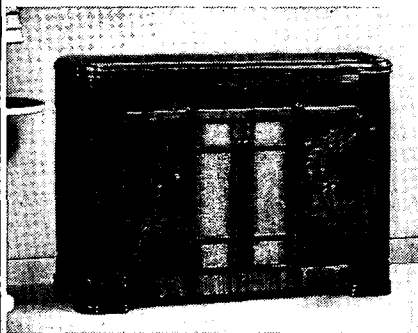
That's My Home and I Wonder Who: Bluebird, 10-inch, \$.25). Louis Armstrong in better form than he has been for months, which leads to a suspicion that this is a re-pressing of two old recordings. However, that is no complaint; for the old Armstrong was as unique as this record proclaims.

Where Are You? and *That Foolish Feeling:* Brunswick, 10-inch, \$.75). Introducing one of the best of the innumerable Armstrong-apers, Bunny Berigan. He is better in the first than in the second of these, for the virtuosity of the latter is too obviously exhibitionistic. The choruses on both are sung by Art Gentry.

Whispering and Tiger Rag: (Victor, 10-inch, \$.75). The latest in a series of remarkable records by the Benny Goodman quartet (clarinet, piano, drums, and vibraphone). Certainly the ensemble playing of this group is the most expert music-making in the world of popular performance.

Indian Love Call and Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life: (Victor, ten-inch, \$1.25). Recorded in version of sweetmeats from two popular songs, *Rose-Marie* and *Naughty Marietta*, sung by the featured performers, Jeannette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. Excellent examples of Friml's and Herbert's best work.

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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from front adv't section, p. xiv)

★★★★ **THE SHIPBUILDERS**, by George Blake. \$2.50. *Lippincott*. Along the River Clyde during the great Lay-off, through the eyes of owner and laborer. Superb characterization and excellent material are blended by an able novelist.

★★★ **YANG AND YIN**, by Alice Tisdale Hobart. \$2.50. *Bobbs-Merrill*. A competent and well-constructed novel, done against a background known and understood. While it lacks the poignant sense of things endured that informed *Oil for the Lamps of China*, it is a fine narrative of human relation, and human aspirations.

★★★ **THE CHRONICLE OF AARON KANE**, by Frederick Wight. \$3.00. *Farrar & Rinehart*. One hundred years of Cape Cod seafaring in the days of sailing ships seen through the eyes of Aaron Kane, a veteran New England skipper. Excellent writing and precision of detail are combined in this superior historical novel.

★★★ **THE LATE GEORGE APLEY**, by John P. Marquand. \$2.50. *Little, Brown*. Mr. Marquand, one of the most prolific of current writers, now turns his hand to the portrait of a Bostonian gentleman of the Old School. In these fictional memoirs, the kings and queens of Back Bay society are gently but thoroughly satirized.

★★★ **CLUTCH AND DIFFERENTIAL** by George Weller. \$2.50. *Random House*. A skillful panorama of modern American life, written with considerable talent.

★★★ **THE SOUND OF RUNNING FEET** by Josephine Lawrence. \$2.50. *Stoke*. There is very little going on in the average American's mind or body that Miss Lawrence does not understand. She writes we and simply. An excerpt from this capable novel first appeared in *THE MERCURY Book Preview*.

★★★ **MAIDEN CASTLE**, by John Cowpe Powys. \$2.75. *Simon & Schuster*. M. Powys again goes psychological in a proli-



THE CHECK LIST

way. The story of the prowlings in and about Maiden Castle by an expedition of Queer People serves mainly to demonstrate the author's researches into Welsh folklore and "Wessex" antiquity.

★★I WAS A PROBATIONER, by Corinne Johnson Kern. \$2.50. *Dutton*. Why the old-timers made good nurses, if they lived through the probation period of training. Our heroine finds time, between births and deaths and mopping floors, to solve a hospital mystery, and win her cap and a handsome interne. Miss Kern's experience provides a gory and authentic background for mystery melodrama.

★★UNEQUAL TO SONG, by Charles Martin. \$2.50. *Stackpole*. Debunking the Louisiana cajins, with the aid of a love story and a score of novelist's character portraits.

★GLORY'S CHILDREN, by Hilton Brown. \$2.50. *Knopf*. The racy saga of a prolific Empire-builder in India.

★DAVID AND JOANNA, by George Blake. \$2.00. *Holt*. Simple and artless narrative of two young people who wanted each other, and had each other, and came in time to realize that rations and quarters are factors in every human situation.

★WHERE THE WEAK GROW STRONG, by Eugene Armfield. \$2.50. *Covici-Friede*. Loosely-strung vignettes of people in a North Carolina town. The author has a gift for observation and a facility in expression; and he writes well enough to have dispensed with his gratuitous obscenities.

STORIES OF THREE DECADES, by Thomas Mann. \$3.00. *Knopf*. A complete and dreary collection of the short stories of the Twentieth Century's most over-rated author.

POETRY

★★★★★MORE POEMS, by A. E. Housman. \$2.00. *Knopf*. Certainly the most im-
(Continued on page 211)

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(Continued from page xxi)

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★★★ THE OXFORD BOOK OF MODERN VERSE, 1892-1935. Edited by William Butler Yeats. \$3.00. *Oxford Press*. One of the most curiously proportioned anthologies ever made. For example, Rupert Brooke and Ralph Hodgson are each represented by one poem, Rudyard Kipling by two poems, and Francis Thompson by three; but there are seven poems by Rabindranath Tagore, nine each by Ernest Dowson and Michael Field, and fourteen by William Butler Yeats.

★★★ NEW POEMS, by Frederick Mortimer Clapp. \$2.00. *Harpers*. A collection of distinctive poems by a poet who will never be popular, but well-worth the slight intellectual effort required for appreciation. Mr. Clapp is bold but not bizarre; his images are sharp and fresh; he is alternately experimental and traditional, sometimes persistently unpleasant, but always honestly inventive.

★★★ DARKLING PLAIN, by Sara Bard Field. \$2.00. *Random House*. Intensely serious, even somber, verse; sometimes clogged with its own intensity, but never stilted nor superficial.

★★★ THE MELANCHOLY LUTE, by Franklin P. Adams. \$2.50. *Viking Press*. Made with the sweat and paste and shears And random rhymes of thirty years, Giddy, but not too *toujours gai*, Here is the best of F. P. A.

★★★ THE METAPHYSICAL POETS: A Study in Religious Experience, by Helen C. White. \$3.00. *Macmillan*. An important re-



THE CHECK LIST

examination of the blend of primitivism, passion, and personal persuasion which intensified the various loosely-affiliated seventeenth-century metaphysicians. Though the style is ponderous and the language stolid, the book is unusually comprehensive.

★ **NOT SO DEEP AS A WELL**, by Dorothy Parker. \$2.50. *Viking Press*. Here, more inseparable than the Siamese Twins, are the two Dorothy Parkers: the serious poet whose recipe is her broken heart mixed in a *réchauffé* of A. E. Housman and Edna St. Vincent Millay, and the wry wit who has to eat of the dish. The result, for all the concocter's skill, tends to grow embarrassing, especially since it forces Miss Parker to gag so often.

★ **SHILOH**, by Edward Doro. \$2.50. *Putnam's*. A combination, though not a real fusion, of pure poetic wildness, spiritual drama, and mysticism prepenes.

★ **GAILY THE TROUBADOUR**, by Arthur Guiterman. \$2.00. *Dutton*. Light verses in the traditional patterns and according to popular formulas.

★ **READING THE SPIRIT**, by Richard Eberhart. Six shillings. *Chatto & Windus*. This young American, whose second volume is published in England, has a remarkable gift for phrasing and a vigor of effect. At present he seems determined to see everything in violent contrasts and in symbolic terms, but there is every reason to believe he will emerge from this over-obvious Blake-and-white period.

★ **SELECTED POEMS**, by Witter Bynner. \$2.50. *Knopf*. A selection of work written during a period of thirty years, overweighed by a long, pretentious foreword and an indiscriminating preface, constituting a sixty-five-page barrier.

★ **PRELUDE TO "ICARUS"**, by John Williams Andrew. \$2.00. *Farrar & Rinehart*. An ambitious attempt to present in a quasi-epical poem the dream of flying, from

(Continued on page 141)



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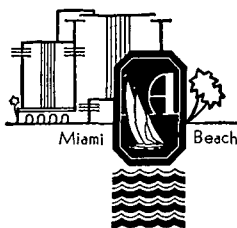
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(Continued from page xxiii)

Icarus to the Wright brothers. The material is fresh, but the diction is stale; the verse-form suggests *John Brown's Body* rewritten by Archibald MacLeish.

★ **MORE THAN BREAD**, by Joseph Auslander. \$1.50. *Macmillan*. More continuously than in any of his other volumes, Mr. Auslander exposes and exploits his weaknesses — his straining for unusual epithets, his overstatements, his high-pitched and almost hysterical apostrophes (the six-page "I Am Poetry!" is one of the worst), his sentimentalities, his dramatic gesticulations that do not hide a lack of real drama. There are many pages about poets and poetry, but one cannot see the poems because of the words.

★ **RESTLESS ANCHOR**, by Wendy Marsh. \$2.00. *Greystone Press*. Neither important nor impressive, but agreeably tuneful with occasional wry notes of self-mockery.

★ **THE DEER COME DOWN**, by Edward Weismiller. \$2.00. *Yale University Press*. By no means up to the standard set by the publication of the most recent volumes (Mr. Agee's and Miss Rukyeser's) in the Yale Series of Younger Poets; yet graceful and fluent versifying.

★ **CLIFF PACE AND OTHER POEMS**, by Thomas Caldecot Chubb. \$2.00. *Boni*. A hodge-podge with a few amusing and colorful lines.

SET IN QUICKSILVER, by Ebra Dickinson. \$2.00. *Poet's Press*.

DAYS OF PITY, by James Franklin Lewis. \$1.75. *Harrison*.

FLUTES IN THE WIND, by Ida Lillian Padelford. \$1.50. *Harrison*.

Colossal — in a small way. So pretentious as to be incredible; so bad they are almost good.

HISTORY

★ **NEW AMERICAN HISTORY**, by W. F. Woodward. \$4.00. *Farrar & Rinehart*.
(Continued on page xxvi)

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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page xxiv)

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★ **BERMUDA AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION:** 1760-1783, by Wilfred Brenton Kerr. \$2.00. *Princeton University Press*. Researches, thorough and documented, into the status of Bermuda as a Crown Colony during parlous days on the American Mainland.

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★★ **WANDERER FROM SEA TO SEA**, by Maarten Matisse. \$2.50. *Harcourt, Brace*. A Dutch philosopher and rover, answering a Call, set out to find the True God, somewhere within the confines of the civilized world. The story of his travels is the semi-mystical confession of a restless recluse.

★★ **JOURNEY WITHOUT MAPS**, by Graham Greene. \$2.75. *Doubleday, Doran*. Artless-artful travelogue, somewhat after the manner of Peter Fleming, but standing on its own legs. One is glad to learn about Liberia, the land of the free, without having to go there.

MISCELLANEOUS

★★★★★ **MEN OF CONCORD**. Edited by Francis H. Allen. \$4.50. *Houghton Mifflin*. Superb collection of intimate portraits from Thoreau's Journals, illustrated with murals by the eminent N. C. Wyeth.

★★★★ **SEVEN YEARS' HARVEST**, by Henry Seidel Canby. \$2.50. *Farrar & Rinehart*. Honest evaluations of the last seven years in contemporary writing, by the retiring editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. A book to buy, and to read thoughtfully.

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★★★ **THE COMPLETE RHYMING DICTIONARY**. Edited by Clement Wood. \$1.89. *Halcyon House*. A useful reference book for poets and would-be poets.

★★★ **I'M LOOKING FOR A BOOK**, by Amy Loveman. \$2.50. *Dodd, Mead*. A handy volume, by the *Saturday Review's* omniscient reading-adviser, furnishing specialized book lists for the reader or researcher in a variety of subjects from Ancient Rome to Scientific Hypnotism.

★★★ **PORTRAITS AND SELF-PORTRAITS**. Collected and Edited by Georges Schreiber. \$2.75. *Houghton Mifflin*. Mr. Schreiber is a good artist. He is also a persevering man. Forty of the leading writers of the day, both here and abroad, have posed for his pencil, and contributed thumbnail autobiographies to this engaging volume.

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★★★ **FROM ALLEY POND TO ROCKEFELLER CENTER**, by Henry Collins

(Continued on page xxviii)

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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page xxvi)

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★★ STREAMLINES, by Christopher Morley. \$2.50. *Doubleday, Doran*. Essays, brief and long, on a multitude of subjects, including airplanes, Sherlock Holmes, Christmas cards, Tristram Shandy, and the Broadway Limited. In other words, more Morleyana. A good many people manage to get along without it.

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said it was poverty and the dis-
ease together. You've got to
be a Rattle Judge, and I'm going to
show you know how it feels to
be one. I'm free now, and I
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